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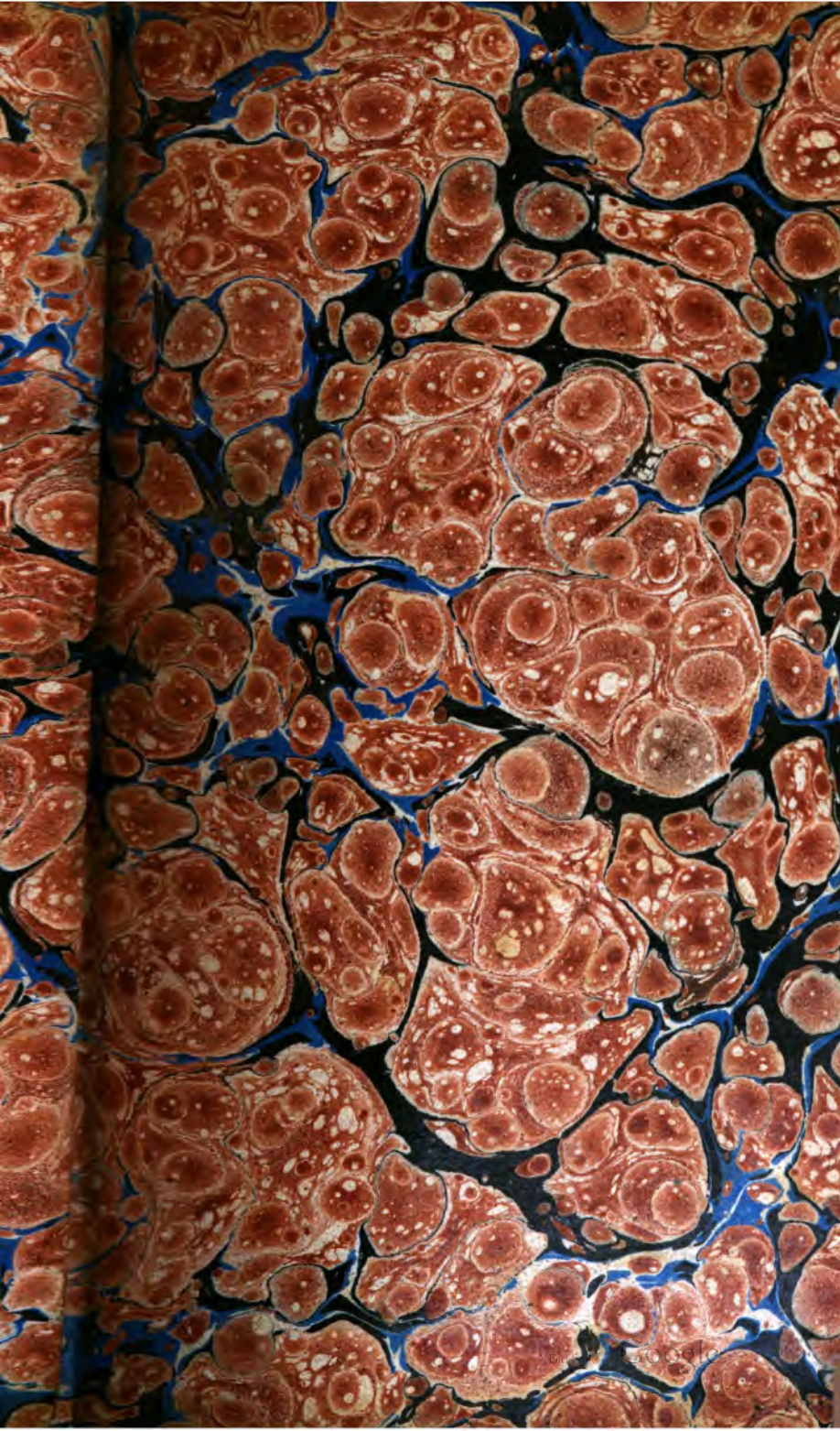
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DE LAUSANNE

par ..... **Mme Boiceau-Gaulis** .....

..... **Lausanne.** .....

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Don de M<sup>me</sup> Boiceau - Gaulis











THE  
*HISTORY*  
OF THE  
HELVETIC REPUBLICS.

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By FRANCIS HARE NAYLOR, Esq.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.



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F. 127

London :

Printed by J. G. Barnard, Skinner Street ;

FOR J. MAWMAN, IN THE POULTRY.

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1809.





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# HISTORY

OF THE

## HELVETIC REPUBLICS.

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### CHAPTER IX.

*General View of the Confederacy—War renewed—Siege of Zurich—Treachery of Brun—Death of Albert—Truce with Austria—Death of Agnes—Arnold of Cervola—War between Berne and the Bishop of Bâle.*

HAVING conducted our history thus far, it may not be improper to take a retrospective view of the rise and progress of the Helvetic confederacy; and to examine, with attention, the respective objects of the different cantons, in acceding to the alliance. We shall thus be enabled to form a more accurate estimate of the principles on which they acted in those important scenes, in which they are about to engage.

CHAP.  
IX.

VOL. II.

B

There

CHAP. There is one striking feature, which distinguishes the emancipation of the Swiss from all other revolutionary changes, recorded in the annals of mankind; and that is, the unexampled prudence and moderation with which they acted, in situations where moderation and prudence are seldom found. During the first fervour of recovered liberty, we discover no symptoms of that sanguinary and vindictive spirit, which has so often tarnished the noblest cause, and which perhaps contributes more effectually to the continuance of arbitrary power, than all its positive supports. To a discriminating mind, indeed, the Helvetic confederacy seems rather the association of weak and insulated tribes, impelled by the necessity of the moment to combine for their mutual advantage against an enterprising foe, than the union of states, exercising a sacred and inherent right, and consolidating their individual force into one common mass for the general benefit of the whole.

In the preceding volume, we entered minutely into the situation of the Helvetic states,

states, before the ambitious projects of CHAP. Austria had roused them to an assertion of IX. their independence. Few indeed were the immunities which they enjoyed ; but they were still sufficient to prove their condition very different from that of abject vassalage. Suffice it to observe, that no innovation could take place in the internal government of any canton, unless its consent was previously obtained. This invaluable privilege was guaranteed by the forms of the Germanic constitution, every member of which was in some degree authorised to resist the encroachments of arbitrary power. Of this Albert himself seems to have entertained so little doubt, that throughout the whole career of his injustice he affected a respect, which was by no means congenial to his temper, for established usages ; nay even when opposition at length convinced him that nothing was to be obtained by artifice or by corruption, he ventured not to throw aside the mask ; but concealing his ambition under the specious plea of vindicating the authority of the empire, he pretended to be reducing a refractory member

CHAP. to obedience, while he was in fact attempting to enslave a free and gallant people.

IX.


No sooner had the forest cantons shaken off the Austrian yoke, and secured their independence by the victory of Morgarten, than their union was established on two great principles, *mutual protection against the aggression of external foes, and the security of their natural rights, as the basis of an equal constitution.* As the most prudent method of accomplishing the former, it was enacted, that *neither of the contracting parties should acknowledge the jurisdiction of any foreign prince without the consent of the other two*; and that in the event of an attack, every man capable of bearing arms should instantly fly to the national standard. *An attachment to the constitution, they thought most likely to be promoted by the simple forms of civil jurisprudence, subjected to the equitable administration of indigenous magistrates.* To these two points were confined all the wishes, and all the views, of the original confederates. Beyond the tranquil enjoyment of domestic comfort and personal liberty, their humble ambition did not extend.



extend. Feudal rights were respected; and due allegiance to the imperial throne was preserved inviolate. This threw the whole odium of the war on the house of Austria; and awakened the imperial towns to a jealous sense of Albert's encroachments.

The situation of the other cantons, at the time of their accession to the Helvetic league, was in many respects different. Thus the objects of the alliance were gradually extended, as circumstances demanded additional precautions, or more extensive projects.

Few propositions appear more capable of demonstration, than *that man is naturally inclined to submission, and that it requires no common degree of misconduct on the part of his governors to rouse him to active resistance.* Whether this proceeds from habitual indolence, from the dread and uncertainty of a revolutionary change, or from an innate reverence for the dazzling insignia of sovereignty, is a problem which we shall leave to the philosopher to resolve. The observation comes within the province of history,

CHAP. and is authenticated by her documents in  
 almost every age.

The town of Lucerne was more immediately dependent on the house of Austria, and would in all probability have submitted patiently to the yoke, had it been imposed with a less rigorous hand. The Lucerners therefore, in embracing the alliance, had fresh obstacles to encounter. Allegiance toward their feudal lord, and a federative union with his inveterate foes, were scarcely under any circumstances compatible. This difficulty, however, did not exist with respect to the forest cantons, who had never acknowledged the supremacy of Albert. Yet such is the slavish adherence of man to the examples of former times, that we find an express reservation in favour of the claims of Austria in a treaty, the manifest object of which was to annihilate them all.

The accession of Zurich forms another epoch in the history of the confederacy, and gives it a different aspect. Exposed to incessant dangers from the treachery of domestic factions, and the machinations of foreign foes, the Zurickers regarded their  
union

union with the forest cantons not only as a CHAP.  
security against external aggression, but as IX.  
the most effectual support which the new  
constitution could receive. It is well wor-  
thy of observation, that till this time the  
limits of the alliance had been restricted to  
their respective territories. They were  
henceforth extended over a wider surface.  
The system was no longer confined to de-  
fensive measures; but provision was made  
for the contingency of offensive operations.

By this powerful accession, the Helvetic  
confederacy acquired a degree of consist-  
ency, which gave it strength and celebrity.  
Their combination began now to be re-  
garded as the surest protection to the sur-  
rounding states, and they were in conse-  
quence courted by all their neighbours.  
Under such circumstances, it could hardly  
be expected that Zug and Glaris should  
treat upon terms of perfect equality. Thus  
we find that, under the denomination of  
confederates, they acquired little more than  
internal security; and ought therefore to  
be considered, rather in the light of depen-  
dents, than in that of equals.

B 4

But

CHAP.

IX.

But the wealth and power of Berne entitled her to the highest consideration. She brought an accession of strength, which was inferior to that of Zurich alone, while she was far less exposed to invasion. Situated at a greater distance from the Austrian territory, the only spot from which real danger was to be apprehended, her views of aggrandisement were directed towards another quarter. Yet it was not reasonable to expect, that the forest-cantons should co-operate in extending the frontiers of Berne, on a side where they themselves derived no adequate advantage from the acquisition, without stipulating to be indemnified for the expences of such an expedition. But in the Argau, which lay nearly at an equal distance from both, they engaged to serve without any pay. This latter clause seems plainly to indicate an intention of carrying the war, at some future period, into the territory of the common foe.

The cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden may justly be regarded as the focus where all the rays of the confederacy united.

united. The other five cantons were more CHAP.  
immediately connected with these; and, IX.  
through these, with each other. The ob-  
ject both of Berne and Zurich was evi-  
dently *aggrandisement*, that of the forest-  
cantons *security*. One principle, however,  
was common to them all: they struggled  
equally for the preservation of their liber-  
ties. Thus was Austria their natural foe,  
the point to which their attention was un-  
remittingly directed; for without the sup-  
port of that powerful family the swarm of  
petty tyrants, who espoused the cause of  
aristocracy, were objects rather of scorn  
than of terror. An alliance founded upon  
such a coincidence of interests was subject  
to none of those little jealousies, which are  
usually the bane of all political confede-  
racies.

From our knowledge of Albert's charac-  
ter, we may easily infer that the pacifica-  
tion, recently effected by the mediation of  
the Margrave of Brandenburg, could not be  
of long duration. Impetuous and arrogant  
by nature, it is not easy to decide whether  
the Swiss were most exposed to his hatred

CHAP. or to his contempt. Neither the examples

**IX.** of his father and brother, nor even the more impressive lesson of personal experience, sufficed to open his eyes, or to eradicate a prejudice founded upon exaggerated calculations of his own power. He despised a people, who had been formerly lost in the mighty aggregate of Austrian dependencies, and considered as a mere cypher in political computation. Even his own misfortunes availed him nothing; for he was willing to attribute them to every thing, except to the real cause. No sooner had one enterprise failed, than he planned another. His finances were exhausted, and his provinces depopulated, that the magnitude of his exertions might secure him against every possible reverse of fortune. Persuaded that he should soon behold his rival prostrate at his feet, if he could once engage the empire heartily to espouse his cause, which he artfully represented as the common cause of monarchy, he omitted no endeavour for that purpose. After appealing to the interests and passions of the leading individuals, he addressed himself publicly


publicly to the diet, accusing the Swiss of CHAP. IX.  
 infidelity in all their engagements. As a  
 proof of his assertion, he appealed to  
 their conduct with respect to Glaris, which  
 he represented as a manifest infraction of  
 the late treaty. Neither was their beha-  
 viour, as members of the Germanic body,  
 more exempt from censure. This accusa-  
 tion was followed by a petition to the em-  
 peror, requesting him to declare them under  
 the imperial ban, and to assist in the meri-  
 torious enterprise of reducing them to a  
 sense of duty. In justification of their own  
 actions, the confederates remonstrated, that  
 the treaty had no retrospective reference.  
 They readily admitted, that they were  
 bound IN FUTURE never to receive a de-  
 pendent of the house of Austria into their  
 alliance. But their union with Zug and  
 Glaris was of a prior date, nor could it by  
 any casuistry be deemed an infraction of  
 the agreement \*.

The love of power is so inherent in a royal  
 mind, that it would have been the height

Müller, II. iv.

of



CHAP. of folly to expect the emperor to listen to  
IX.  their remonstrance with an impartial ear. From the beginning, indeed, he appears to have entertained a strong prepossession in favour of Austria. But, notwithstanding every prejudice, he was unwilling as yet to declare openly against the Swiss. On the contrary, he resolved to fulfil his promise of visiting Zurich in the autumn; and on his arrival there, he received the deputies of the united cantons with studied benignity. They explained to him the nature of their confederacy, and the principles upon which they acted; insisting that they had done nothing prejudicial to the legal claims of Austria, or contrary to their duty as members of the Germanic body. Charles not only expressed himself satisfied with these arguments, but advised them to draw up a vindication of their conduct, and to present it to Albert in the form of a memorial.\* To this they readily acceded, but their moderation was productive of no salutary effects. Contests of this sort

\* Muller, II. iv.

have

have seldom been determined by the pen: CHAP. IX.  
 it is to the sword alone, that men must  
 appeal for the vindication of their dearest  
 rights. The crisis is dreadful: but lost  
 indeed is the nation, which hesitates for a  
 moment between slavery and death!

The memorial remained unanswered, and  
 the duke continued his preparations with  
 unremitting activity. While things were  
 in this anxious state of suspense, Charles  
 returned to Zurich, to celebrate the festival 1534.  
 of Easter; when finding that no progress  
 had been made toward a pacification, he  
 offered himself as mediator, and invited  
 both parties to submit to his award.\* The  
 proposal was eagerly embraced by Albert,  
 who had every thing to gain, and nothing  
 to lose by the decision. But the Swiss  
 had already suffered so much from want  
 of circumspection, that they were no longer  
 to be deceived by fair professions.  
 With the apparent candor of Queen Agnes  
 and its consequences fresh in their memory,  
 they replied, that they were greatly in-

\* Muller, II. iv.

debted

CHAP. debted to the emperor for his kind intentions, and should not object to submit their grievances to his arbitration; provided it was clearly understood beforehand, that the sentence was in no regard to affect the validity of their union. Charles, who was strongly prejudiced in their disfavour, affected to treat this reservation as an injurious reflection upon his integrity. But finding that nothing could induce them to give up the point, he was so irritated at their obstinacy, that he proceeded in the plenitude of imperial power to annul the bond; under pretence that it was contrary to the laws of the empire, for any member to conclude an alliance, without the consent and approbation of the chief.\*

Being totally unprepared for such an event, the delegates were completely at a loss in what manner to reply. The danger of perseverance was obvious; but, on the other hand it was impossible to submit, without renouncing every principle, for which they had so long and so honourably

\* Muller, H. iv.

contended.

contended. To abandon, in the moment CHAP.  
of distress, those friends in whose defence IX.  
they were solemnly pledged to sacrifice  
their lives, would be baseness in the ex-  
treme. It was therefore ultimately decided  
to make the following reply, by the mouth  
of Brun: "It is necessary your majesty  
"should be apprised, that the indissoluble  
"bond by which we are united, far from  
"having been dictated by a spirit of in-  
"subordination, was our only resource  
"against absolute slavery. Neither was  
"the alliance formed, till every appeal to  
"the empire had been treated with neg-  
"lect. Your predecessors on the impe-  
"rial throne sanctioned the proceeding by  
"their approbation. To the words of that  
"very act we now refer for proofs, that it  
"was never our wish to throw off our  
"ancient dependence on the Germanic  
"body, nor to deprive it's members of  
"their just and hereditary prerogatives.  
"To our subsequent conduct we, likewise,  
"appeal: Let that confirm, or invalidate,  
"the assertion. Far be it from us, even  
"now, to deny to Albert any claim, which  
" is

CHAP. "is not absolutely inconsistent with a free

IX. "constitution. But to renounce an union,  
 "to which alone we are indebted for in-  
 "dependence, and to throw ourselves  
 "blindly upon the mercy of a prince, of  
 "whose violence and injustice we have  
 "experienced such recent proofs, is a sa-  
 "crifice too great to be expected from  
 "men, who have tasted the sweets of li-  
 "berty. The pretensions of Austria are  
 "an endless source of disquietude. Let  
 "those pretensions be valued. Let the  
 "price of our emancipation from all fu-  
 "ture claims be finally ascertained; and  
 "we shall not object to pay it: for we are  
 "a plain and artless people, little versed  
 "in political casuistry or legal discrimina-  
 "tions; but we know the sanctity of an  
 "oath, and our promises have always been  
 "kept inviolable."\*

Charles was so dissatisfied with the re-  
 solute tone, in which this answer was de-  
 livered, that he broke up the conference,  
 and quitted Zurich; having first strictly

\* May, II. xviii.

enjoined

enjoined all parties to refrain from hostilities, till his farther pleasure should be known. In his way back he met Albert at Bruck, where he was easily persuaded to take an active part in the coalition.\*

No sooner were the allied princes prepared to open the campaign, than the emperor's injunction was withdrawn, and the coalesced army having passed the Glatt, took possession of Rapperswyl, which Albert had compelled Count John to cede to him, under colour of a sale. Few events could have proved so distressing to the Zurichers: for John, the more completely to deceive them, had engaged to observe the strictest neutrality. Their city was now surrounded on every side, and had nothing to hope for, but from its own exertions.†

In detailing the events of the Helvetic union, it is no easy task for the historian to avoid repetition. In all the attempts which were made by the Austrian princes to subjugate that gallant people, we find the same rashness and arrogance on one

\* May, II. xviii.

† Muller, II. iv.



CHAP. part, and the same prudence and resolution on the other. Immense hosts are dispersed by a handful of men; and mighty preparations vanish like the mountain smoke. Throughout the whole progress indeed of this memorable contest, if we may be allowed to employ the emphatic language of Scripture, God seems to have **HARDENED THE HEARTS** of princes, that he might lead them more certainly to their destruction.

Albert now found himself at the head of a more numerous army, than he had yet conducted to the overthrow of this devoted city. The same commanders presided over the auxiliary forces; all forgetful of past miscarriages, all elate with anticipated triumphs. In a few days after their arrival, they were joined by the emperor, with a large body of troops from his hereditary states; when the whole or the combined force is said to have amounted to upward of forty thousand men.\* Yet notwithstanding their vast superiority,

\* Rhan. May, II. xix.



CHAP.

IX.

both in number and in tactics, they advanced with cautious timidity, and seem to have trusted more to the terror inspired by the pomp and parade of war, than to the genius of their commanders, or the discipline of their soldiers. In this respect however they evinced an ignorance of human nature, which would serve for an additional proof of the weakness of their councils, if any additional proof could be requisite. In situations of extreme danger, the first impression is the strongest. Men gradually recover their powers of reflection, and exert them in devising a remedy. Such was precisely the case with respect to Zurich. Had the enemy marched rapidly to the assault, their numbers might possibly have prevailed. It was by the rapidity of his motions, and the alarm which he inspired, not less than by the superiority of Spanish discipline, that Cortez conquered Mexico. But the cautious and dilatory proceedings of the beleaguered powers gave courage to the besieged. In a few days they ventured without their walls, skirmishing occasionally

CHAP. ally with the advanced posts. By degrees  
 IX. these desultory combats assumed a more  
 regular form; every advantage, however trifling, giving fresh animation to the garrison, and raising their drooping spirits. Sometimes, indeed, this reviving confidence carried them too far. Tempted by the supineness of the besiegers, a detachment advanced to such a distance from the walls, that the allies drew out their forces, in hopes of bringing on a decisive battle. But so uncertain are the operations, and so unconquerable the jealousies of all coalitions, that at the very moment when fortune appeared to have delivered the enemy into their hands, an event took place, which not only frustrated their present expectations, but rendered their prospects more precarious than ever. Just as they were preparing for action, a contest arose for the post of honour. The duke of Austria claimed it, as the soul and author of the war; while the bishop of Constance pretended, that it had never been refused to his Swabian followers. The difference was submitted to the emperor, who

who decided it by saying, that it belonged of right to the Bohemians, and that he was resolved to cede his just prerogative to none.

CHAB.  
IX.

This determination proving equally unsatisfactory to all parties, a violent contest ensued, during which the important moment was irretrievably lost, and a spirit of jealousy excited, which every subsequent transaction tended only to aggravate.\*

Secrecy is by no means the characteristic of a confederate camp. The Zurichers were informed of the misunderstanding which had taken place, and prudently resolved to encourage it. For this purpose they displayed the imperial eagle on every tower in conjunction with the appropriate banner of their state; meaning thereby to exhibit an unequivocal proof of their loyalty to the Germanic body, and to admonish the imperial cities, that by waging war against a co-estate, they were taking part in a quarrel totally foreign to the interests of the

\* May, II. xix.

CHAP. empire. Several of the inhabitants also

**IX.** found means to gain admission into the allied camp, and artfully profited by the occasion to disseminate a well-founded suspicion respecting the real motives of the siege. A body, composed of such heterogeneous particles, needed little persuasion to separate. Many of the allies were already weary of a war, in the event of which they had no immediate concern. Remonstrances, in consequence, were daily offered to the emperor against the continuance of hostilities; and many forcible arguments were employed, to demonstrate the injustice of the enterprise, and the many obstacles which still remained to be surmounted. Charles, who began already to repent his folly, in having rendered himself subservient to the ambition of Austria, rejoiced at being furnished with a plausible excuse for withdrawing his aid. Having therefore summoned the confederate princes to council, he entertained them with a tedious harangue upon the duties of an emperor. "In his public capacity (he remarked) he ought to be guided by  
" the

“ the aggregate will of the whole body, CHAP.  
 “ and not by the suggestions of private IX.  
 “ friendship; or the dictates of personal  
 “ interest. To his great surprise, he found  
 “ that the Helvetic union was by no means  
 “ deemed a valid cause for war, by the  
 “ majority of the German states; and  
 “ therefore in conformity to their wishes,  
 “ which had been manifested in the clear-  
 “ est manner, he announced his intention  
 “ to retire.”\*

Though it was obvious that this inquiry should have been instituted before an army was assembled, Charles prided himself not a little upon the ingenuity of the device, and departed immediately for Bohemia to settle his domestic concerns, and to prepare for an expedition into Italy.

Though deserted by all his allies, Albert was too much exasperated to hear of peace, and determined to persist in the contest, as long as his hereditary dominions could supply the means of war. The plan was

\* Muller, II. iv.

CHAR now entirely changed. Every thing,  
IX. which pride and malice could inspire for  
the destruction of mankind, was practised  
in it's fullest extent. Nothing, however,  
decisive took place on either side. The  
duke's resources gradually failed, nor could  
the exhausted country any longer afford  
it's wonted supplies. No sooner was the  
enemy's territory completely drained, than  
the licentious soldiery ceased to distinguish  
between friend and foe. A body of Hun-  
garian horse, which formed part of the  
Austrian army, treated every description  
of people with the same unfeeling rapacity.  
Accustomed to the barbarous system of  
bloodshed adopted between the Christian  
and the Mahometan states, they disdained  
to submit to the loose and indulgent regu-  
lations, which in those days bore the name  
of discipline in an European army. Train-  
ed in the school of plunder, and attached  
to the profession of war, because it seemed  
to authorise the infringement of every  
moral duty, they regarded all things which  
tempted their unbridled appetites as their  
own,

own, without instituting any very scrupulous inquiry whether they belonged to friend or to foe. CHAP. IX.


But patience has her limit; and the very worm may be trampled into resistance. It was thus with the subjects of Austria. Albert was daily assailed with complaints and murmurs. To the first he was insensible by nature, but the latter were repeated in language too energetic, not to command his notice. Besides, the example of the Helvetic states wrought so forcibly on his mind, that his wretched people at length extorted that attention from his fears, which they would have vainly implored from his humanity. The necessity of applying some speedy remedy was no longer doubtful; and none could be found so efficacious as peace. Neither could a treaty be negotiated, without his previous recognition of the validity of the Helvetic union. This was a severe trial for the pride of Austria; but no alternative remained. The war could no longer be supported. The sentiments of the people had been unbounded in terms, which admitted but of



CHAP. of one construction; and when the people  
IX. are firm and united, no earthly power can  
effectually resist their will. Even the  
haughty Albert was constrained to yield.  
At a diet held at Ratisbonne, he conde-  
scended publicly to admit the long-con-  
1355. tested point as a preliminary to negotiation.  
Placability, however, was no ingredient  
in his character. Military operations had  
ceased, but the spirit which had fomented  
them, was far from softened. He had too  
lately however experienced the inefficacy  
of offensive measures, to entertain a thought  
of recommencing hostilities. But there  
were other weapons by which the confe-  
derates were assailable; and to those he  
determined to recur.

It required little penetration to discover  
that the Helvetic states were at this time  
influenced by very different motives. Zurich  
was so severe a sufferer from the continu-  
ation of the war, that it was probable she  
would consent to every sacrifice, except  
that of her independence, in order to se-  
cure a permanent peace. But the forest-  
cantons were less exposed to danger, as  
their

their natural barrier left them little to CHAP. apprehend. Having made themselves IX. masters of the castle of Wildenburg, the Zugers were delivered from the persecutions of a petty despot, who had long rendered himself the terror of the adjacent vallies. This striking opposition in the sentiments and interests of the different states, tempted the duke to flatter himself that, by artful management, he might succeed in spreading dissensions throughout the confederacy. With this view he addressed himself to the emperor, who was now returned from his Italian expedition, and had been chosen arbitrator by both parties; requesting, that he would impose such conditions only as were conformable to ancient treaties, and leave the controverted points in their existing state of indecision. Charles was easily persuaded to conform implicitly to his wishes; and having drawn up the articles of accommodation agreeably to the prescribed outline, he sent them by Austrian deputies to be offered separately to each canton, instead of  
of

CHAP. of submitting them to an assembly of their  
 respective delegates. The views of Zurich  
 were of too pacific a nature to admit of  
 hesitation. The instrument was no sooner  
 presented to Brun, than he signed it in  
 the presence of a few senators; an action  
 for which he\* was severely censured by his  
 enemies, and which in truth it was not  
 easy for his advocates to defend. Exulting  
 in their unexpected success, the ministers  
 proceeded on their mission to the other  
 states; but from them met with a very  
 different reception. The forest-cantons  
 had acquired circumspection from past  
 experience; and having carefully examined  
 the instrument, they were so confounded  
 at the ambiguity of it's style, that they  
 positively refused to ratify it, till it had  
 been thoroughly canvassed in a general  
 diet. As no persuasion could shake their  
 purpose, it was absolutely necessary to

\* M. Mallet accuses Brun of having sold himself to  
 the house of Austria; and in confirmation of the charge  
 asserts, that he held a considerable post under Albert, and  
 received an annual pension from him. 309.

comply :

comply : a congress was summoned to meet at Zurich, to which all the cantons were invited by their delegates to attend\*.

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No sooner was the assembly opened, and the deed produced, than the duplicity of the emperor became apparent : The union with Zug and Glaris was not even mentioned : but there was a clause applicable to the case, enacting the *restoration of all territories dependent on the house of Austria, which had been alienated during the war.* Some partial distinctions were also made in favour of Zurich, which excited a well-grounded suspicion of premeditated treachery. But when they came to the article, in which the forest-cantons were stiled by the duke of Austria *his forest-cantons*, they indignantly rose up, and declared with one general burst of disapprobation, that they were betrayed. "What Prince," exclaimed one of the deputies, while the hearts of his auditors beat high with sympathetic applause, "What prince can boast "that he ever conquered us? Was it at Mor-

\* Müller, II. iv.


" garten,

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“garten, or at Laupen, that we were sub-  
 “dued? Let him then ransack the mouldy  
 “records of his kingdom for documents to  
 “prove that our progenitors, by a volun-  
 “tary surrender of their hereditary rights,  
 “gave him any authority over us. Let him  
 “produce the instrument of our subjection,  
 “and we are ready to submit. But if this  
 “be not the case, what made us slaves?  
 “For, as to laws unsanctioned by our free  
 “consent, we know them not; they are no  
 “laws for us. In defence of our freedom,  
 “we have shed our dearest blood. The  
 “sword is still unsheathed; and till our in-  
 “dependence be acknowledged in satisfac-  
 “tory terms, it shall never return to the  
 “scabbard\*.”

It was in vain for Brun to attempt to justify his conduct; his colleagues were deaf to every argument, though he exerted all his eloquence upon the occasion. Unable to defend himself by any positive allegations, he pretended that the natural simplicity of his character had induced him to

\* Muller, II. iv.

place implicit confidence in the veracity of CHAP.  
IX.  
the Austrian ministers, who asserted that   
the instrument was strictly conformable to  
the wishes of the Helvetic union; and that  
he had accordingly subscribed it without  
farther inquiry. Repentance, he said, could  
not recal or expiate the past, but if the  
confederates would listen to the counsels  
of a man, who had ever shewn himself their  
steady friend, a remedy might still be sug-  
gested. "Let us appeal to the imperial  
" throne; and state the unfairness of the  
" whole transaction. It is in the emperor's  
" power to redress our wrongs, and it would  
" be injustice to doubt his inclination."

This project was agreed to, as the best  
which could be adopted in the present di-  
lemma; and delegates were dispatched to  
Charles, who was then in Moravia to request  
a more favourable interpretation of the  
award. But he was either so occupied with  
important business, or so indifferent to the  
remonstrances of the deluded Swiss, that  
he left the memorial unanswered till the  
ensuing summer. Far however from being  
checked

1356.

checked by his disappointment, Brun continued to brave the censures of his countrymen, and strengthened the unpopular alliance by additional clauses; which, though individually advantageous to the city of Zurich, were utterly incompatible with her engagements toward the other cantons.\*

The conduct of Zurich affords a striking proof of the numberless inconveniences which attend federative governments, and, which must inevitably increase in direct proportion to the extent of the country over which it prevails. To obviate this, it would be necessary to expunge from the heart of man a passion inherent in his nature, and which possibly forms the master-spring of his conduct. The ambition and interest of the individual state must ever operate, with greater effect, in all political transactions, than the glory or advantage of the federation; exactly as in private life we find the majority of the world more

\* Tacchudi, vi.

strongly

strongly influenced by considerations of private emolument, than by the most splendid theories of public good: CHAP. IX.

At length the emperor condescended to publish the long expected rescript, intended to elucidate his former decree. His partiality towards the house of Austria became now more manifest than ever, as Zug and Glaris were declared to be no longer members of the Helvetic body. This edict had scarcely appeared, when the Austrian bailiff, Albert of Buckheim, came to receive in person the homage due to Albert, as legal sovereign of those cantons. The conduct of the Zugers, upon this trying occasion, was resolute and dignified: "*Till the duke has confirmed our bond, we are ignorant what terms to employ,*" was their firm, but guarded answer\*.

All the other cantons, seized with consternation, assembled at Lucerne, to consider the alarming state of public affairs, and the remedy which it would be proper to apply. The debate was short; for courage was the only monitor, when they designed

\* Muller, II. iv.



CHAP. to consult. War now appearing inevitable, they determined no longer to waste the important moments in idle consultation, but to occupy the defiles of Zug, which were justly regarded as the keys of Switzerland, before an Austrian army could approach. The deputies of Glaris being present, the bond was renewed with every imposing ceremony which could tend to imprint it upon the hearts of the spectators.

Under most other circumstances, a step so decisive would have been sufficient to rekindle the flame of war; but Charles had previously resolved not to proceed to extremities. Neither would he have been induced indeed to advance so far, had not Albert deceived him by a positive assurance, that he would experience no continued opposition to his decree. Neither was the duke himself in a condition to move: he had reached the limits of his turbulent career, and lay dangerously ill at Vienna. Disappointed ambition, and the natural irritability of his temper, had undoubtedly contributed

contributed to accelerate his end. His death however did not take place, till an armistice was actually concluded\*.

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From a survey of his political character, posterity must be at a loss to discover for what actions Albert received the surname of *Wise*, unless we can suppose it to have been intended as the bitterest sarcasm upon his conduct. The early part of his life was dedicated to the ecclesiastical profession, which he quitted immediately after his brother's death. That he may have been deeply versed in that mysterious jargon which, to the utter degradation of the human intellect, once constituted the abstruse science of theology, is a fact which we shall not attempt to controvert. From those therefore, who could prevail upon themselves to appreciate highly such dull pursuits, he might possibly have merited the reputation of Wisdom. But it is vain to search for the criteria of a comprehensive mind, or for those noble qualities which give lustre to a throne. In all the transactions of his reign

\* Tschudi, vi.

CHAP. we discover, the violence of a priest; in  
IX. none, the talents of a sovereign.

Immediately after his death, Rudolph, his eldest son, demanded a suspension of arms; but with the express condition, that Zug and Glaris should continue to pay the wonted imposts to the house of Austria; while by way of compromise, he promised that their chief magistrates should be chosen from among the inhabitants of Schweitz and Zurich. At the same time, the alliance between Austria and Zurich, which had been originally limited to five years, was prolonged for two more\*.

Having thus established a temporary calm, Rudolph began seriously to apply his thoughts to those chimerical projects of aggrandisement, which have ever occupied his ambitious family. And that he might the more easily effect his purpose, he purchased the march of Rapperswyl, and caused a bridge to be thrown across the lower part of the lake, under pretence of facilitating a passage to the pilgrims, who

\* Tschudi, ib. B. 6.

flocked

flocked in crowds to the shrine of the holy <sup>CHAP.</sup> Virgin of Einsiedlen. By thus connecting <sup>18.</sup> his dominions on both sides the lake, he secured additional vigour to his operations in case of a war.


In the beginning of the year 1862, John 1862. bishop of Gurk, chancellor of the house of Austria, was raised to the important post of governor of Suabia, and Alsace: with uncontrolled authority over all bailiffs and magistrates of every description, and vested with ample powers to mortgage, alienate, or exchange any part of the territories over which he presided. In the latter case, however, he was to take no decisive step, without the knowledge and approbation of two of the counsellors, who were joined with him in this extensive jurisdiction, and who had been selected from the most illustrious families in the adjacent provinces. One of the first acts of this new administration was, to prolong the truce with the forest-cantons.

Meanwhile Zurich concluded a fresh alliance with St. Gal, and several other towns upon the lake of Constance, which was to

CHAP. subsist during the life of the emperor, and  
 IX. for two years after his death. Charles also  
 made a treaty with Zurich, by which he not  
 only ratified all its existing privileges, but  
 gave his sanction to the Helvetic bond.—  
 By a specific clause, he guaranteed to them  
 all the territories, which they might here-  
 after acquire, during the term of this alli-  
 ance, not excepting even the town of Rap-  
 perswyl, though it was guarded by an ex-  
 press proviso, that no attempt should be  
 made to surprise it, except in case of a rup-  
 ture between himself and the house of Aus-  
 tria. Various other articles were inserted,  
 which can be little interesting to a modern  
 reader, though they were highly important  
 to the parties concerned, and contributed  
 essentially to their comfort and security\*.

To a people sensible of their real advan-  
 tages few events can happen, which do not  
 furnish materials for ingenuity to work  
 upon. The canton of Uri was desirous of  
 abolishing every remaining vestige of feu-  
 dal subjection, and seized with eagerness


\* Tschudi, vi.

the present opportunity to purchase all the CHAP.  
 prerogatives and revenues belonging to the   
 convent of Wettingen within their territory;  
 which the abbot was tempted to cede, for  
 a moderate price, both on account of his  
 embarrassed circumstances, and of the  
 difficulty which he experienced in collect-  
 ing his dues.

Albert left four sons, two of whom sur-  
 vived their father but a short time. Ru-  
 dolphi, the eldest, was murdered on a hunt-  
 ing party; and his brother Frederick was  
 cut off by a contagious fever, in the flower 1364.  
 of his days. This year was, likewise, dis-  
 tinguished by the death of Queen Agnes.  
 She died in the convent which she had  
 founded at Konigsfelden, after having in-  
 habited it for the space of sixty years. In  
 an age when an ostentatious adherence to  
 the eternal duties of religion was considered  
 as the chief of christian obligations, and  
 not unfrequently as an apology for the want  
 of every moral virtue, we cannot be sur-  
 prised if the exemplary devotion of this  
 princess should have conferred upon her a  
 reputation of sanctity, to which the violence

CHAP. of her passions did not give her a just title.

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 In the course of the preceding pages, we have so frequently had occasion to introduce this lady to our reader's notice, that little remains now to be added. We have already seen, that her mind was not so totally engrossed with the pursuit of eternal glory, as to have acquired an indifference, perfectly evangelical, for the concerns and grandeur of the present world. The temporal aggrandisement of her family, the leading passion of her soul, rivalled heaven in her affections; and, perhaps, had the two objects been brought into competition, pride might have turned the scale in favour of the house of Austria. Her conduct toward the confederates was an illiberal return for the unlimited confidence which they reposed in her integrity. Neither can her unrelenting persecution of her father's murderers, and her inhuman treatment of the virtuous Adelaide, be easily reconciled with those doctrines of charity and forgiveness, which are equally illustrated by the precepts and the example of the divine founder of Christianity. She appears, indeed,

deed, to have been one of those characters CHAP.  
not uncommon in the world, who look only IX.  
to external objects, and regard the forms  
and discipline of the church as more essen-  
tial to salvation than a life of moral recti-  
tude, of social sympathy, and of diffusive  
benevolence.

The Austrian dominions were once more  
divided between Albert and Leopold, the  
surviving sons of Albert the Wise. Their  
characters are represented by contem-  
porary writers in very different lights. The  
former being endowed with those soft and  
amiable qualities which captivate esteem,  
and render the possessor almost equally the  
object of admiration and of love; while in  
the estimation of Leopold, these were the  
humble virtues of a private station. The  
sins of mankind, and not their affections,  
were the only certain basis upon which,  
according to his theory, regal power could  
repose. To question his authority, was  
treason; to oppose his will, was rebellion\*.

For the present, however, both these  
princes were so completely occupied in

\* Tschudi; vi.

defending



CHAP. IX. defending the Tyrol against the duke of Bavaria, that they had little opportunity of displaying their opposite characters; and were both induced, from motives of policy, to cultivate the friendship of the Swiss.

But a storm was collecting in another quarter, which threatened to burst upon the contiguous provinces with destructive fury. During the long wars, which had desolated the fertile provinces of France, even the most industrious had been diverted from agricultural improvements by the terrors attendant on a hostile army. Thus, habits of idleness and dissipation had gradually spread among the lower classes, to the utter exclusion of every honourable pursuit.—The active spirit of this enterprizing people, being diverted from its proper channel, assumed a character more congenial to the ferocious temper of the times. Accustomed to no law but that of force, they were easily persuaded to consider strength as the only just criterion of property; and led from necessity to embrace a system, of which they had been long the innocent victims. Hence numerous bands of freebooters assembled


sembled in almost every province of France, CHAP.  
and set at defiance all legitimate authority. IX.

Indulging in those licentious excesses which civil commotions, beyond every other species of warfare, are calculated to excite, they plundered the adjacent country with indiscriminate rapacity. But their animosity was particularly directed against convents and monasteries, where wealth and beauty presented their irresistible attractions. Even towns of strength were no longer able to afford a secure asylum to their affrighted citizens, but fell an easy prey to their enterprising spirit. To them, indeed, the loss of men was a consideration of indifference, as supplies were continually pouring in from the disbanded companies, which had been trained to rapine in the long contests between England and France. Neither were leaders of experience wanting. The whole tribe of noble adventurers, whose venal services were directed wherever the views of plunder or of pay attracted their mercenary courage, no sooner found themselves without employment in the armies of the belligerent princes, than they embarked

CHAP. IX. embarked in a course of life, to which they were equally incited by former habits and present distress. At the head of troops whose terrific denominations, for the most part the offspring of caprice, too clearly indicated the objects of their ferocious pursuit, they shaped their lawless course in various directions, and for several years infested the frontier-provinces both of Italy and Germany by their desultory incursions. Their system of warfare bore a strong resemblance to that, which is practised by the rapacious cavalry of Arabia. When opposed by a superior force, they disappeared with the rapidity of a whirlwind, leaving behind them the mournful traces of their desolating march.\*

One of these armies of adventurers is represented as having amounted to the prodigious force of forty thousand men. It was headed by Arnold of Cervola, a man descended from an illustrious family in Parigord, but of desperate fortune and profligate

\* Stumpf, Settler, Tschudi, and Barre, describe the atrocities committed by these banditti, and draw an affecting picture of the misery of the times.

gate manners\*. After laying waste the CHAR. provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, he ap- IX.  appeared suddenly before Mentz, and obliged the citizens to redeem themselves from plunder by the payment of a considerable ransom. The alarm became general in Switzerland, as he approached its borders. Troops were assembled in haste, and ordered to march to the defence of Bale, against which he was first advancing†.

Hitherto, the emperor had remained a tranquil spectator of the public calamity; but the urgency of the peril at length awakened him from his disgraceful torpor. He was struck with the danger to which his own dominions would be exposed, if these banditti were suffered to proceed in their career. By rapid marches he gained the banks of the Rhine, resolving to dispute the passage, should they attempt to penetrate into the interior of Germany. Arnold was no sooner informed of Charles' ap-

\* According to May, Cervola took the incongruous title of *the Friend of God*, and *the Enemy of Mankind*. II. xxiii.

† Mallet, II. v.

proach,

CHAP. proach, than he fell back towards the  
IX. mountains of Burgundy, unwilling to contend with a force which might render his fortune dubious. Unaccustomed to every military precaution, and made furious by disappointment, his troops no longer preserved the smallest resemblance of subordination, but assembling in tumultuous groupes, publicly accused their commander of incapacity and cowardice. Determined to prove that one part of the charge at least was groundless, Cervola appeared with undaunted courage before the clamorous host, threatening the disobedient with instant death. But his power, the creature of opinion, was no more. From invectives they proceeded to blows, the tumult became universal, and he fell in the struggle.

Satisfied with being thus delivered from immediate danger, Charles did not attempt to pursue the fugitives, but suffered them to retire unmolested. From the moment the evil became remote, his avarice got the better of all other considerations. It was his reigning passion. So deeply indeed had this

this sordid vice taken root, that notwithstanding his affected piety, he chose rather to expose himself to the censures of the sovereign pontiff than incur the expences incidental to powerful exertion for his relief.


Urban VIII. had been insulted in his palace at Avignon, by a lawless band of adventurers, and obliged to redeem his capital by the payment of an enormous ransom. In his distress, he applied to the emperor for assistance. But indulgencies and dispensations were so sunk in value, that Charles declined any risk to obtain them, though proffered with the liberality of a man who feels that his store is inexhaustible, and that he may continue to give without being impoverished by his generosity.\*

The senate of Berne adhered with constancy to the system, which it had so long followed with success ; though in many instances repugnant to those high-flown sentiments of liberty, of which Helvetia made such an ostentatious parade.

\* Barre, Histoire d'Allemagne.

If

CHAP. IX. If we investigate their actions with a critical eye, we find them by turns the abettors of arbitrary power, or the avowed champions of civil freedom, just as the gale of interest directed their course. Tyranny, in the person of a co-burgher of Berne, assumed a less hateful aspect: but no sooner did the despotic baron incur the resentment of those haughty republicans, than the rights of mankind were to be vindicated by the sword. Thus, with an ambition perfectly republican, they sacrificed even liberty itself to the aggrandisement of the state.— Money, however, continued still their favourite engine; and whenever a favourable opportunity presented itself, it was employed with the spirit of a people who understand the true value of their commodity. The refinements of calculation however, as is frequently the case with refinements of every description, were sometimes carried to excess. By economising too much, they became the dupes of their own frugality; for every increase of power, thrown into the scale of Austria, was a concern of a much greater

greater magnitude, than any momentary CHAP.  
~~expense which might be incurred in defeat-~~ IX.  
 ing the projects of that ambitious house. 

The town of Friburg in the Brisgau, being 1366.  
 unable any longer to contend against the  
 count of Furstenberg, the citizens applied  
 to Berne for support. But, as their situation  
 was too remote to be an object of im-  
 mediate interest, the claims of humanity were  
 overlooked. Notwithstanding this repulse,  
 the Friburgers resolved to make a last ef-  
 fort in defence of their independence, and  
 with the addition of a small reinforcement  
 from the neighbouring towns, gave battle  
 to the count. The attempt proved fatal.  
 Their defeat was irreparable. Deprived of  
 every possible resource, no choice remained  
 but to pay a heavy contribution to the  
 victors, as an indemnification for the charges  
 of the war, and to throw themselves uncon-  
 ditionally into the arms of Austria \*.

The following year, Berne engaged in a 1367.  
 sanguinary contest with the bishop of Bale.  
 Bienne had been formerly an imperial

\* Tschudi, vi.



... of which was en-  
 ... in the name of *Seclat*†. In  
 ... of this union, by usur-  
 ... was ... A de-  
 ... it that ... being elevated to  
 ... of *Bain* made a donation in  
 ... at that see‡. The  
 ... could not be a  
 ... as they  
 ... confirmed by the ex-  
 ... exercised upon  
 ... independent jurisdiction,  
 ... ecclesiastical control.  
 —History informs us, that she was at  
 times allied with Solure, Fribourg, and  
 Berne. The treaty with this latter city  
 was renewed in 1352, at which period it  
 was rendered perpetual§.  
 In 1367, John of Vienna succeeded to

\* Tschudi supposes *Bienne* to have existed in the time  
 of *Tiberius*, under the name of *Bipennis*. *M. d'Anville*,  
 on the contrary, is of opinion that it was anciently called  
*Itinera*, and that it is mentioned by that title in the *Itine-*  
*ry of Antoninus*.

† In. 1169.

‡ In 1842.

§ Stumpf, viii.

the

the episcopal chair; a man of haughty character, and arbitrary principles. In his youth he had imbibed the highest ideas of ecclesiastical pre-eminence, and had now an opportunity of reducing his favourite theory to a practical experiment. But, so long as the connection subsisted between Bienne and Berne, he had little to expect from the obedience of a people whose ideas of government corresponded but imperfectly with his own, and whose opinions were backed by the argument of a strong military force. He resolved therefore to proceed by other means, and to try the efficacy of spiritual weapons. A mandate was issued, enjoining his pretended subjects to dissolve an alliance, which was totally inconsistent with their allegiance. For some time he awaited with patience the result of this pastoral exhortation; but, finding his expostulations productive of no salutary effect, he assumed a different mode of conduct. At the head of a numerous cavalry, he surprised the city by night, and massacred its peaceful inhabitants in their beds, without distinction of

CHAP. city \*, the administration of which was entrusted to the counts of Neuchatel†. In process of time this jurisdiction, by usurpation, was rendered hereditary. A descendant of that house being elevated to the episcopacy of Bâle, made a donation of all his possessions to that see‡. The immunities of Bienne indeed could not be legally affected by this transfer, as they had been repeatedly confirmed by the express declarations of successive emperors: and she had consequently exercised upon all occasions, an independent jurisdiction, without the smallest ecclesiastical control. —History informs us, that she was at times allied with Soleure, Fribourg, and Berne. The treaty with this latter city was renewed in 1352, at which period it was rendered perpetual§.

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† In. 1169.

‡ In 1242.

§ Stumpf, viii.

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CHAP. IX.

CHAP. IX. age or sex. Having thus avenged his insulted dignity, he proceeded in the plenitude of his episcopal authority to abrogate the league. Violence, though frequently employed as such, seldom proves the means of persuasion. The wretched citizens were no sooner delivered from his presence, than they addressed their complaints to their indignant allies. The Berners armed; and the confederates were summoned to join them. The bishop however was apprised of their design, in time to save himself by a precipitate flight. He fled to Neuchâtel, a place of considerable strength, carrying with him several of the magistrates of Bienne, whom he detained as hostages for his future safety.

The allies next assaulted a castle belonging to the bishop, in the vicinity of Bienne, which had been made use of as a place of confinement, and took it by storm. The prisoners were set at liberty, and the fortress was razed to the ground. An at-

• May II. xxvi.

tempt.

tempt to surprise Neuchatel was not equally successful. The enterprise failed : and, the the approach of winter rendering any regular attack altogether impracticable, the republican army returned to their homes\*.

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IX.

It was resolved in the ensuing spring to invade the episcopal territory with the combined forces of Berne and Soleure ; and a spot in the Munster-thal was appointed for the union of their respective forces. The charms of this romantic valley are familiar to every enlightened traveller ; nor is he less acquainted with that wonderful work of Roman industry, the celebrated passage of *Pierre-pertuis*. Conscious of the importance of this post, the bishop had fortified it with regular works, and selected his bravest troops for it's defence. But the persevering courage of the assailants rendered all his efforts abortive ; and after an obstinate conflict the ecclesiastical troops were driven from their entrenchments.

\* Stettler

E 3

Far

CHAP. Far from abandoning the contest, how-  
 IX. ever, the sanguinary prelate determined to  
 1368. open the next campaign with increasing vi-  
 gour. For this purpose, he advanced to  
 Olten, a small town upon the Aar, which  
 he had lately mortgaged to the count of  
 Nidau. Incensed at the atrocity of his  
 conduct, or fearful of incurring the dis-  
 pleasure of his more powerful neighbours,  
 the count refused him a passage over the  
 bridge; and the river being swollen with  
 incessant rains, was no longer fordable\*.

Thus precluded from every hope of re-  
 taliation, the bishop listened with less appa-  
 rent reluctance to the proffered mediation  
 of the adjacent states. After much dis-  
 cussion, it was agreed that the dispute  
 should be referred to arbitration; and pro-  
 per judges being appointed, they came to  
 a resolution that as no material losses had  
 been incurred, each party should sit down  
 contented with their respective expences.  
 With respect to Berne, however, the sen-

\* Tschudi, B. vi.

tence

tence was more severe; as they were condemned to a fine of thirty thousand florins, by way of punishment for their wanton destruction of several churches in the Munster-thal. Three thousand were immediately paid, but the remainder appears to have been never claimed. This decision is worthy of notice, as it strikingly exhibits the temper of the times. To destroy a monastery was a crime, which required the most exemplary punishment; but to murder a fellow-creature with deliberate cruelty, to invade the security of domestic repose, and deluge a city with blood, though it excited universal indignation, drew down no ecclesiastical censures. The atrocious prelate was suffered still to enjoy all the emoluments of his station, as if he had invariably fulfilled it's duties with patriarchal correctness!

It would be an unnecessary trespass upon the reader's patience, to detain him with a circumstantial narrative of all the petty contests, which successively arose between the confederates and the adjacent barons. The ferocity of the latter had been

E 4

carried



CHAP. carried to the highest pitch. Their castles  
IX. were converted into receptacles for plunder; nor could the merchant travel with security, unless protected by a numerous escort. To such an extent, indeed, had this evil spread, that we discover the name of a count of Hapsburg among these formidable foes to social order.

1373. Neither should we deem a mercenary expedition, undertaken by three thousand of the confederates to support the *Visconti* in the Italian wars, more worthy of observation, was it not the first instance on record of the Swiss receiving foreign pay. Unfortunately for the happiness of *Helvetia*, the example became contagious. The love of glory, combining with the lust of gold, presented irresistible attractions. The nerve of the European infantry was composed of auxiliary Swiss; who when worn out in the hardships, or enriched by the plunder of distant campaigns, carried back to their native cities all the vices and follies which they had gleaned in the changeful scenes of martial service: thus gradually undermining that purity of mind,  
which

which had formed the brightest ornament of their national character, and which confers more real honour on it's possessors than the proudest trophies of military triumph.

CHAP.

IX.

CHAP.

## CHAPTER X.

*Ingelram de Coucy—Death of the Emperor  
—His Character—Progress of Literature  
—Schism in the Church—Attempt upon So-  
leure—Renewal of the War—Battle of  
Sempach—Wesen besieged and taken.*

CHAP. **I**N the person of Arnold of Cervola we  
X. have already gained acquaintance with  
1375. the savage bands of adventurers, which in-  
undated Europe during the fourteenth cen-  
tury. Yet it is fair to confess, that those  
extraordinary expeditions are enveloped in  
a cloud, which the inaccuracy and exagge-  
ration of contemporary writers, render it  
almost impossible to penetrate. We be-  
hold immense armies, like the fabled hosts  
of Cadmus, rising as it were out of the  
ground. We read of the towns, which they  
sacked; of the countries, which they pil-  
laged. But the relation is interspersed  
with so many marvellous incidents, that it  
seems

seems rather the wild invention of a dis-CHAP.  
ordered brain, than the rational narrative <sup>X</sup>  
of historical truth. To search for a satis-  
factory solution, at this distance of time,  
might prove perhaps an impracticable un-  
dertaking. In the course of the last chap-  
ter, we gave some developement to our  
ideas: more plausible arguments it would  
be difficult to adduce.

Ingelram de Coucy, the father of him  
whose exploits we are about to commemo-  
rate, was descended from an ancient and  
illustrious house in Picardy. We are told  
that he married Catharine of Austria, a  
daughter of Duke Leopold, rendered me-  
morable by his defeat at Morgarten; that  
her father, not finding it convenient to ad-  
vance the marriage-portion, agreed to mort-  
gage a part of his dominions in Alsace and  
the Argau, as security for future payment.  
Possessed of abundant wealth, and occu-  
pied in distant enterprises, Ingelram had  
neglected to demand the arrears, so that  
the interest had been suffered to accumu-  
late during a succession of years\*.

\* Stettler, Tschudi, Duchene, Froissard, &c. &c.

His

CHAR. His more prudent son, began seriously <sup>X</sup> to calculate the vast importance of the sum in question, and addressed his claims to the reigning dukes. The brothers replied, that they were perfect strangers to the contract; but that, the lands in dispute being *male tenures*, it was impossible for any right to have devolved to Coucy on the part of his mother. Ingelram was not of a temper to be satisfied with vague excuses; and had immediate recourse to Edward III. of England (whose daughter \*, Isabella, he had married), and to Charles V. of France, from whom he received considerable supplies, both in men and money.

At a time, when the greater part of the Christian princes were at peace with each other, it was no arduous task to assemble an army. Coucy's standard was no sooner erected, than adventurers flocked to it in crowds from every nation of Europe. In a short time he found himself at the head of between fifty and sixty thousand combatants, of whom a large proportion were English. Having collected this formidable

\* Hume, xvi.

host,

host, he directed his march toward the CHAR.  
banks of the Rhine. In his progress, he X.  
was continually joined by large reinforce-  
ments; the miserable remains of those un-  
disciplined banditti, who under various  
leaders had formerly laid waste the frontiers  
of Germany.

Apprised of the preparations which were making, Leopold endeavoured by the most conciliatory conduct to secure the co-operation of the Swiss, on whose decision the event of the war seemed in a great measure to depend; and having issued orders to his subjects to retire into the nearest towns with their most valuable effects, he waited the approach of the tempest with anxious suspense.

It was about the time of harvest, when Coucy appeared on the confines of Alsace. Irregular bands of partisans, who had been attracted to his standard by the expectation of plunder, led the way. Though fully sensible of the ruin to which they should themselves be exposed, if such a licentious body were allowed to penetrate into the Argau, the forest-cantons were still unable  
to

CHAP. to surmount their hereditary hatred of the  
**X.** house of Austria, and unwilling to move in  
it's defence. Accustomed to watch the  
motions of her ancient foe, with the same  
unconquerable jealousy, with which Greece  
had formerly regarded Philip of Macedon,  
the canton of Schweitz in particular, not  
only refused to embody her militia, but  
exerted all her influence with the confede-  
rate states to prevent them from taking an  
active part in the contest. Fortunately  
however for the repose of Helvetia, Zurich  
and Berne was less bigoted to their old  
prejudices, and had the wisdom to sacrifice  
all secondary considerations to the general  
good. They accordingly entered into a  
treaty with the duke, by which all former  
animosities were suspended, and engaged  
to bring their combined forces into the  
field, in case the terrific enemy should pe-  
netrate into the country between the Aar  
and the Rhine. They promised also, to  
induce the states of Soleure and Lucerne  
to join the common standard; while the  
only equivalent which they required in re-  
turn,

turn, was a prolongation of the truce with **CHAR.**  
the forest-cantons for ten years\*.


Having laid waste the fertile province of Alsace, destroyed the castles, and sacked the towns, Coucy appeared before Brissac, into which Leopold had thrown himself with the flower of his nobility. The conduct of the duke at this momentous crisis, did equal honour to his courage and to his prudence. It was probable, if he could stem the violence of the torrent for a short time, that all real danger would subside, as the enormous force of the invader must inevitably perish from it's own unwieldiness and the desolation which accompanied it's march.


Instead of occupying himself in the siege, Ingelram advanced toward the frontiers of Switzerland, spreading terror and devastation wherever he came. Since the irruption of the northern barbarians, so severe a scourge had not visited that happy land. To determine the line of conduct which it would be most advisable to pur-

\* Muller, II. v.

sue,



CHAP. sue, was no easy task; but it was con-  
sistent with the spirit of a free people, if no means were left to escape destruction, to perish with arms in their hands. They resolved, in consequence to meet the storm with vigorous resistance. The united forces of Berne and Solenre took post at Harzogenbuchsee, in the Upper Argau, where they were joined by a detachment of Austrians. Meanwhile the Zwickers, reinforced by a strong body from Lucerne, encamped near Sur, in the Lower Argau. Coucy still continued his progress. He was already arrived on the banks of the Aar, when the confederates finding themselves exposed to the whole brunt of the war, and suspecting that Leopold might have left them in this unprotected state from interested motives, fell back without striking a blow. To this resolution they were prompted by the wisest policy, as the situation of the enemy afforded an additional inducement to avoid a decisive action. His ranks grew daily thinner. Numbers perished from want of common necessities, and many had deserted, having  
already

already obtained the ultimate object of CHAP.  
X.  
mercenary courage, abundant plunder.  But the flower of the army still remained unbroken, and consisted in a numerous cavalry, accoutred in all the splendor of a chivalrous age, and animated by that romantic spirit which delights in danger.

A body like this was still highly formidable. Their strength was increased also by the terror, which preceded their march. So general indeed was the panic, that even those obvious precautions which common sense might have dictated, though unaided by military study, had been in many places totally omitted. Some of the most important passes on the Jura were left unguarded. The unpardonable neglects of the counts of Kyburg and Nidau, who had been entrusted with their defence, exposed them both to the suspicion of treachery\*.

Meeting with no opposition, Coucy divided his army into three columns, that forage and provisions might be more easily procured†. The whole country between

\* May, II. xxx.

† Id. ib.

CHAP. the Reufs, the Limmat, and the Aar was  
 X. exposed to the incursions of his troops, who  
 levied contributions with all the rapacity  
 of men, whom habits of blood and present  
 distress rendered callous to every senti-  
 ment of humanity.

Winter, however, was fast approaching ;  
 and to that the miserable inhabitants look-  
 ed forward for their delivery, with anxious  
 expectation. They knew, that the rigour  
 of an Alpine climate would render it im-  
 possible for the best appointed army to keep  
 the field ; and they were aware that the ene-  
 my was ill-prepared to contend against its  
 severity. The frost likewise set in with  
 unusual keenness, and even at an earlier  
 period than usual. To obtain supplies  
 for his troops, no expedient was left but to  
 quarter them in the different villages ; nei-  
 ther could this be effected without immi-  
 nent peril. The remote position of the dif-  
 ferent hamlets obliged him to extend his  
 line over a wider surface, that was strictly  
 conformable to prudential tactics. In  
 such a situation, the detachments were ex-  
 posed to frequent attacks from a vigilant  
 and

and active foe. Whoever is acquainted CHAP.  
 with the topography of Switzerland, must X.  
 know how well that country is calculated  
 for a war of posts. Even the best disci-  
 plined armies are exposed to continual  
 losses, from the impossibility of acting in  
 condensed masses. Flying corps are sur-  
 rounded and taken, even when the main  
 body is moving forward in the full career  
 of victory.

A force so heterogeneous as that which  
 Coucy led, from its incapacity of struggling  
 against these calamities, became every hour  
 the victims of fresh disasters. Their reso-  
 lution sunk with their change of fortune,  
 while their adversaries derived increasing  
 courage from every little success. Provi-  
 sions were no where to be procured, and ur-  
 gent clamours announced the universal dis-  
 tress\*.

Coucy fixed his head quarters in the con-  
 vent of Fraubrunnen, between Arberg and  
 Hutwyl, where he was attended by a nu-  
 merous train of nobles, and secure from the

\* Stumpf, Stettler, Tschudi, Muller, II. v.

**CHAP.** apprehension of danger, neglected every <sup>X.</sup> necessary precaution. Attentive to all his motions, and minutely informed of every circumstance that passed, the Berners conceived the daring project of surprising his troops in the midst of their festivities. The enterprise was conducted with secrecy, and executed with vigour. Worn out with various excesses, the soldiers were sleeping at their posts ; while their chiefs were immersed in every species of debauchery. In a moment, the aisles and cloisters were strewn with the slain: even the altars were polluted with blood. In the hurry and darkness of the scene, all resistance became vain. To fly was their only hope. Dispersed in the neighbouring woods, numbers perished from the cold. At the dawn of day, the Berners found themselves completely victorious, and returned in triumph\*.

Most of the other posts being attacked at the same time, and with similar success, the distress of Coucy was now become ex-

\* Muller, II. iv.

treme.

treme. The severity of the season, joined CHAP.  
to the rigorous precautions of the Swiss, X.  
deprived him of all supplies. Nothing  
therefore remained, but an attempt to re-  
gain Alsace; nor could this be accomplished  
without exposing his army to imminent  
danger, should the Austrians avail them-  
selves of the opportunity to harass him dur-  
ing his retreat. In this disastrous state his  
military talents were eminently displayed.  
He did every thing that a prudent and expe-  
rienced general could perform; and in spite  
of all the efforts of his adversaries, reached  
at length the very spot whence he so lately  
departed. But how widely different was his  
situation, with a diminished army, de-  
feated hopes, and tarnished reputation.

Notwithstanding the fatal issue, however,  
of this ill-concerted expedition, it cannot  
be denied that Coucy was possessed of abi-  
lities far above the level of mediocrity; and  
that he was eminently distinguished by the  
brilliant qualities of that romantic age.\*  
But to conduct a heterogeneous band, com-

\* Muller, lib. iv.

CHAP. posed of the dregs of every nation, and to  
 X. support them in a foreign country without  
 either magazines, or allies, or the co-operation  
 of an internal faction, required a combination  
 of talents, which but seldom fall  
 to the lot of man.

Annibal, it is true, brought Rome to the  
 brink of destruction, and Alexander overturned  
 the throne of Persia. But these are dangerous  
 examples. The eloquent romance of Quintus  
 Curtius led the Swedish warrior to his grave;  
 and perhaps, the enterprising genius of Coucy  
 was electrified by the heroic achievements of  
 the son of Philip. He ought however to have  
 recollected, that he was neither at the head  
 of the phalanx, nor marching against the  
 subjects of Darius. The enterprise was  
 rash, and could be justified, alone by the  
 splendour of victory.

Having thus by the wisdom of his measures  
 averted the storm, Leopold was too sensible  
 of the danger from which he had escaped, not  
 to seize with eagerness any expedient for  
 satisfying the ambition of Coucy. After the  
 death of Rudolph of Nidau,

Nidau, who fell at Buren by an English CHAP. arrow, his rich succession was divided be- X. tween his collateral heirs, the counts of Thierstein and Kyburg. Their title, however, being somewhat dubious, the aspiring bishop of Bâle prepared to contest it, under pretence that it devolved to him, as a military fief. After much altercation and blood-shed, it was at length agreed, that the dispute should be referred to the judgment of Providence; or, in other words, should be resolved by the decision of arms. Fifty-six knights were chosen by each party, to whose prowess its determination was committed. The combat was supported on both sides with obstinate courage, till fortune at length declared against the prelate. Money however being a more important object to the impoverished victors than an increase of territory, which at best was held by a precarious tenure, as many difficulties arose in the division of the spoil, they were easily prevailed upon to cede the counties of Nidau and Buren to the duke of Austria, in consideration of an adequate

F 4

sum



CAP. sum\*. No sooner was the purchase concluded, than the fiefs were offered by Leopold to Coucy, and accepted by him in full compensation for all his claims†.

Scarcely had the invaders quitted the Austrian frontier, when Leopold concluded an armistice with the confederates for eleven years. During this happy period of uninterrupted tranquillity, the annals of Helvetia afford few occurrences to captivate attention. Scenes of carnage are, unfortunately, calculated to produce a strong sensation on the human mind; but the enjoyments of retired innocence, though by far the happiest state to which our precarious destiny can attain, require to be set off by all the charms of poetical description.

Changes, however, were frequently taking place in the political balance of Helvetia; but they were effected by contract, and not by arms. Exhausted by his restless ambition, the bishop of Bâle had no resource but that of alienating a portion of the episcopal domain, and he in consequence sold

\* Forty-eight thousand florins, † Stettler, Stumpf.

to Austria the town of Little Bâle. By a similar arrangement, the republic of Berne became possessed of Arberg, with its dependent territory. This important acquisition gave additional solidity to the political fabric, but at the same time loaded the public with such an increase of debt, that the people began to indulge themselves in alarming murmurs at the measures of government\*.

CHAP.

X.

1577.

The death of the emperor occasioned no material alteration in the political horizon, as he had before-hand secured the imperial dignity to his son†. The character of Charles IV. has been variously drawn, according to the views and interests of his different biographers; though his partiality for men of letters, and his patronising of the university of Prague seem to have prejudiced the more enlightened in his favour. The ecclesiastics, on the other hand, whose pride and ostentation he restrained within proper

1578.

\* Stumpf, xii.

† Wenceslaus was crowned king of the Romans in 1376. (Schmidt.)

bounds,

CHAP. bounds, complained loudly of his austerity,

X. It cannot be denied indeed, that in the administration of justice he was rigorous; but it must at the same time be acknowledged that, so far as his own private interest was unaffected, his sentences were for the most part dictated by a spirit of equity not very common in that turbulent age. He is likewise blamed by many of the old German writers, for having neglected the imperial dominions in Italy, and suffered the Venetians to make themselves masters of the whole country between the Adige and the Adriatic. In this accusation we discover the characteristics of prudence, rather than of pusillanimity; though national vanity may have been induced to give it a different interpretation. Italy was the rock, upon which the power of Germany had constantly split. But the enterprising genius of the age embraced without reflection every object, which could eventually lead to military fame; and to balance the difficulties of an undertaking against its probable advantages, was universally reprobated as the token of a mean and sordid mind.

During his contest with Clement VI., CHAB.  
X.  
Charles displayed firmness and wisdom in an eminent degree. He insisted that the Pope should in future forbear to insult the Germanic empire by calling it a *fief of the holy see*, and branding the emperor's themselves with the ignominious title of *vassals*. Finding him determined, however, to persist in his arrogant claim, instead of courting ruin by exposing himself singly to the fury of a vindictive clergy, he very prudently summoned a diet at Metz, in which the proud pretension was rejected with disdain. To Charles, likewise, Germany was indebted for the *golden bull*\*. It was composed by the civilian Bartolus; and though it savours strongly of the mystical and

\* The *golden bull*, so called from a seal of gold appended to it, consists of thirty chapters; twenty-three of which were published at Nuremberg, and the remaining seven at Metz. It fixes the number of electors, assigns to them the principal offices of state, arranges the ceremony of an election, and provides for the administration of the empire, during an inter-regnum. This famous instrument may be justly regarded as an artful attempt to raise the imperial power,

CHAP. and pedantic taste of the age, it was cer-  
 X. tainly productive of benefit, by giving a  
 more stable and regular form to the com-  
 plex system of that intricate constitution\*.  
 Thus far the portrait of Charles appears  
 in a favourable point of view. We must  
 now examine it in a different light.—  
 His partiality toward Bohemia led him  
 frequently to sacrifice the interests of the  
 empire to that darling object of his here-  
 ditary affection. To the aggrandisement  
 of his own family he is likewise accused of  
 having been addicted, even beyond what is  
 pardonable in the chief of an elective mo-  
 narchy. But the greatest blot in his cha-  
 racter was an insatiable avidity for wealth,  
 by which he was tempted to patronise every  
 species of abuse. The imperial authority  
 was constantly on the stretch to create new  
 privileges, merely that he might dispose of

power, at the expence of all the other princes of Germany;  
 as it assumes a tone of authority more consistent with the  
 character of an Asiatic despot, than the chief of an elective  
 monarchy. Gaillard, *Histoire de Francois*. I. 395.

\* Schmidt, VIII. ix.

them

them to the highest bidder. Under his corrupt administration, every thing became venal. Several of the principal cities of Germany took advantage of this mercenary spirit, to purchase an exemption from all feudal jurisdiction. This gave rise to the vulgar proverb, "*that Charles had plucked the eagle.*" Vanity; likewise, appears to have formed a prominent feature in his motley character. This passion, in all probability, was not without it's influence in dictating the Golden Bull; as many of it's most important provisions turn wholly on the arrangement of objects, which to the eye of reason appear trivial, but which in the estimation of German pride then constituted the sublimest concerns of regal power.— Neither can we wonder that a sovereign, who after assigning the great offices of state to the most eminent of the German princes, vainly arrogated to himself a paramount supremacy over all the European potentates, should regard the regulation of external ceremony as the most momentous of all occupations. Yet was the authority of this universal monarch so limited in his own

CHAP.  
X.

CHAP. own country, that a part of his equipage  
 X. was at one time detained at Worms by a  
 butcher, whose bill his attendants had neglected to discharge.

To a philosophical observer the period before us is one of the most interesting in the annals of mankind. The human genius was beginning to emerge from that intellectual chaos, into which it had been plunged by the united efforts of pedantry and superstition. Though the salutary effects of this happy revolution were less sensibly felt among the mountains of Helvetia, than in most other parts of the civilized world, yet it cannot be ungrateful to the enlightened reader, to take a hasty view of the rapid progress, which reason and science were daily making under the genial influence of an Italian sun.

It is observable, in all ages, that the first step toward literary improvement have been announced by the timid essays of the pastoral muse. In the southern provinces of France, the modern bard first tuned his sylvan reed. The Italians were delighted with these imperfect specimens; and by attempting

attempting to imitate, soon surpassed their CHAP. masters. Neither can it be justly deemed <sup>X.</sup> matter of surprise that a people, whose language is harmony, should in a short period have reached a degree of perfection to which the ruder accents of the Gallic tongue could never attain.

Dante, who died in 1321, notwithstanding the extravagance of his plan and the obscurity of his stile, has sometimes burst out into a strain of sublimity, which no subsequent poet of any nation, Shakspeare and Milton alone excepted, has ever equalled. We have only to regret, that his subject is not more interesting; and that from the obscurity of the characters which he selected for the objects of his invective, their names and vices would have been long since buried in oblivion, had they not been called to an inglorious immortality by his indignant pen.

The name of Petrarch has been so long held sacred by the admirers of elegiac poetry, that no writer can escape the imputation of literary heresy, who should attempt to pluck away a single sprig from his wreathed brow.



CHAP. brow. We are ready to acknowledge, in their  
X. fullest extent, the important obligations,  
which the Italian language owes to his refining taste; we feel the beauty of his numbers, and admire the harmony of versification: yet still we lament, that a genius capable of such sublime productions should have wasted, in deploring the cruelty of Laura, years which might undoubtedly have been more profitably employed. In the few instances, in which he has presumed to deviate from this querulous strain, particularly in his animated attack upon the corruptions of modern Babylon, he rises into a dignity of stile, and displays a vigour of conception, which prove him capable of the noblest attainments. Yet while we venture an opinion, which will probably be censured for its severity, we should be unjust to the memory of this celebrated man, were we to conceal what is due to his unremitting zeal for the revival of learning.

Almost every thing to be admired in that species of writing, for which La Fontaine is so justly celebrated, with a long catalogue of the best theatrical productions of every European

European stage, are indebted to the lively CHAP. invention and comic genius of Boccacio for X. a considerable portion of their merit. Nor is this his only praise; for he gave a polish to prose, which no succeeding writer has surpassed, and none except Machiavel has equalled.

But while we hail the rising sun with religious enthusiasm, we cannot avoid discerning the multifarious spots which obscure his splendid orb. Not even Petrarch himself, elegant as his compositions in general are, is exempt from the pedantry of the times. This, indeed, is a defect, to which the Italian writers have ever been prone: and ought therefore to be viewed with an indulgent eye. Though after every due allowance has been made, it is impossible to deny, that his frequent intermixture of pagan (or as he might possibly term them, of classic) deities, with the mysteries of Christianity occasion a confusion of ideas, which nothing but the ignorance of the age could excuse, and nothing but it's corrupted taste could admire.

CHAP. The arts kept pace with the progress of  
X. literature. Many of the most useful discoveries, which even now contribute to the comforts of life, sprang from the inventive genius of the fourteenth century. China, glass, and paper were manufactured in several towns of Italy. Notes were employed in music. Spectacles and gunpowder may be likewise classed among the productions of this creative period. There seems no doubt, that cannon were employed in the defence of Algeiras by the Moors, and some historians even attribute the victory at Crecy to the use of artillery.

Wenceslaus, who mounted the imperial throne at the age of seventeen, found the empire, and indeed the whole of Europe, divided by the grand scism of the west.—Urban VI., a Neapolitan by birth, had been raised to the papal chair by the Italian cardinals, under the influence of a Roman mob. In the first moment of triumph, upon beholding the holy father once more restored to the capital of the Christian world, it was universally believed throughout

out that corrupt city, that the suffrages of the sacred college had been guided by the immediate impulse of the Holy Spirit. But no sooner had they recovered from this momentary delusion, than they discovered that this elect of heaven was not only subject to all the infirmities of our degenerate nature, but that he was prone to every malignant passion, which can degrade the character of man. By his avarice, cruelty, and pride he offended those, to whose inconsiderate votes he owed the triple crown.—The majority of the cardinals retired to Fondi, where they declared the election void, under pretence that the turbulent interference of the populace had operated with greater effect upon their minds, than the preternatural communication of the divine will. Having been prevented at Rome from exercising the necessary freedom of sentiment, they now proceeded by a more unbiassed choice to elect Robert, son of Amadeus count of Geneva; who immediately assumed the name of Clement, and established his court at Avignon.\*

CHAP.  
X.

\* Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, III. 326.

CHAP. X. This unfortunate scism threw all Europe into a convulsion, from which it did not recover for many years. The emperor, together with the kings of England, Hungary, Portugal, Bohemia, Sweden, Denmark and Poland, as well as most of the Italian states, adhered with pertinacity to the see of Rome: while France, Spain, Savoy, Scotland, and Naples, declared in favour of Clement.—The animosity with which this ridiculous contest was supported, seemed to increase in proportion to the insignificance of the objects for whom they were contending; while nothing was omitted by the worthless competitors to spread the flame of discord over all the states of Christendom. Saints of every nation and description were called in, as auxiliaries by both parties. Saint Catharine of Sienna, a celebrated personage in the legends of catholicism fought on the side of Urban, with all the acrimonious virulence of a polemic; while the adverse faction, in order to counteract the effects of such high authority, played off their revelations and miracles with unblushing hypocrisy.

• Switzerland, indeed, appears to have CHAP. acted with a degree of prudence uncommon X. in an age, when controversial theology was so much in fashion. During the whole of this contemptible strife, her natives preserved an unbroken system of neutrality. But still the acrimony with which the hostile pontiffs combated each other, their impious appeals to Providence\*, and the anathemas which they reciprocally vomited forth, contributed so essentially to lower those ideas of infallibility, which bigotry had for ages attached to the papal character, that we feel ourselves justified in adverting to a transaction, productive of so memorable a revolution in the religious opinions of mankind. Every event conducing to diffuse a spirit of inquiry, was a step toward the reformation of those abuses, which had so long been encouraged by the court of Rome, as the most productive sources of wealth and power.

In pity to our reader; we shall pass over in silence those petty quarrels, which oc-

Mosheim, III. 328.

G 3

casionally

CHAP. occasionally troubled the harmony of the  
X. Helvetic confederacy. But an effort made  
by the count of Kyburg to render himself  
master of Soleure, appears to merit more  
minute investigation. It has been the misfor-  
tune, or rather folly of every age, for princes  
to aim at a stile of magnificence too great  
for their revenues to support. Every dimi-  
nutive court possessed all the appropriate  
gradations of a royal household. The ne-  
cessary consequence of this childish weak-  
ness was an exhausted treasury. Like  
many of his illustrious compeers the count  
of Kyburg had sacrificed his most essential  
interests to this idle vanity. Pressed on every  
side by impending distress, he formed the  
bold design of extricating himself from all  
his difficulties by one decisive blow. Suc-  
cess would not only reinstate him in those  
parts of his hereditary dominions, which  
he had been obliged to alienate, but give  
strength and stability to the whole. To the  
imputation of treachery he felt himself in-  
different, convinced that the brilliancy of  
the acquisition would obliterate the infamy  
of the enterprise.

It

It is certain that several of the neighbouring princes were not only privy to his project, but were prepared to declare in his favour the very moment he entered the town. Even Leopold himself was not exempt from suspicion, though no positive proof could be adduced.

The month of November, on account of the length and darkness of it's nights, was selected for the execution of the plot. A chosen body of troops approached the gates which a mercenary priest had undertaken to open. Having gained admission, they were to secure the magistrates, and seize the arms. Every thing was prepared. The alarm-bell was muffled. The soldiers were on their march.\* A peasant, having observed a troop of horse advancing cautiously toward the city, suspected their design — By a nearer path he hurried to the gates, where he arrived before them, and calling to the guard warned him of the impending danger. The intelligence was immediately communicated to the chief magistrate, who

\* Tschudi, vi, May, II. xxxiv.



CHAP. issued orders for the alarm to be given.—

X. The situation of the bell leaving no doubt of a conspiracy, the citizens were summoned to their posts. At this important moment, the enemy appeared before the gates; but finding themselves discovered, they retired in confusion, venting their resentment upon the harmless peasantry for their disgraceful failure.

So flagrant a breach of the law of nations could not fail to excite general indignation throughout the Helvetic states; but particularly at Berne, which from it's vicinity to the territory of Kyburg was most exposed to similar outrages. To suffer the offence to pass unrevenge, was to invite it's renewal. They resolved, however, to act both with vigour, and with caution; and accordingly demanded of Leopold, by an extraordinary embassy, whether they were at liberty to proceed to hostilities, without infringing the treaty. The duke of Austria replied, "that since the count had commenced hostilities, he must extricate himself as he could\*."

\* Muller, II. v.

No sooner were the delegates returned CHAP. X.  
 with this answer, than the Berners entered  
 the territory of Kyburg. Unable to resist  
 their impetuosity, the count was speedily  
 reduced to the necessity of supplicating for  
 a truce till the ensuing spring, in hopes of  
 engaging some of his former allies to take  
 part in the contest. But all his solicitations  
 proved ineffectual; for it is the merited lot  
 of unsuccessful villainy, to be left without  
 a friend: Though callous to the reproaches  
 of conscience, Kyburg was by no means  
 indifferent to the suggestions of pride: find-  
 ing himself abandoned by all mankind, he  
 gave way to the bitterness of affliction, and  
 died of a broken heart.

The resentment of the confederates was, 1383.  
 however, far from being satisfied by the  
 death of their foe. At the expiration of  
 the truce, they renewed the war with in-  
 creasing vigour, when several castles fell  
 successively a prey to their arms. En-  
 couraged by their successes, they prepared  
 to strike a more decisive blow, and to open 1384.  
 the campaign by the siege of Burgdorf, the  
 usual residence of the Kyburg family. The  
 forest-

CHAP. forest-cantons flew with alacrity to their  
 X. assistance. To be free, was the first object  
 of their existence ; the second was, to destroy the foes of freedom. Zurich, Zug, and Glaris, also sent their contingents. Even the duke of Savoy, though he might have been suspected of an hereditary bias for the adverse party, fulfilled his engagements with a degree of integrity which is not always to be met with in the cabinets of princes\*.

The combined army amounting to upward of fifteen thousand men, conducted the siege with so much ardour, that the garrison was quickly reduced to capitulate.

A suspension of arms took place, on condition that the town should surrender unless relieved within six weeks. During the truce, Montford approached with a numerous and well-appointed cavalry, within sight of the allied camp. But finding it too strong to be attacked with any hope of success, he contented himself with throwing supplies into the town, and re-

\* Stumpf, vii.

tired

tired. This, however, was sufficient for the CHAP.  
 purpose of Bertold, who wanted only a X.  
 plausible excuse for not complying with  
 the terms of the armistice. The allies re-  
 monstrated, but Bertold was inflexible;  
 and defended the place with so much ob-  
 stinacy, that they were compelled to raise  
 the siege\*.

Bertold was too prudent to be elated  
 with this temporary success, and too saga-  
 cious not to discover the impossibility of  
 long supporting himself against the supe-  
 rior force of the allies. The people were  
 already exhausted by the burthens of the  
 war, and terrified at the prospect of being  
 exposed to a renewal of it's calamities.—  
 With loud and repeated murmurs, they  
 called for peace; declaring their resolution  
 of submitting to any conditions which  
 the enemy might exact, rather than un-  
 dergo the horrors of a second siege. To  
 language like this there is but one reply;  
 and, an opportunity soon offering for an  
 amicable accommodation, Bertold em-

\* Muller, vi.

braced

CHAP. braced it with alacrity. All parties being  
 X. inclined to peace, the treaty was soon  
 brought to a conclusion; and the towns of  
 Burgdorf and Thun were ceded in perpetuity to the republic of Berne, in consideration of the sum of thirty-seven thousand eight hundred florins\*.

The war was now suspended; but the calm was momentary, and preparatory to an approaching storm. There is something so attractive in the charms of power, that it requires no moderate portion of forbearance to renounce the pre-eminence which we have once enjoyed.

Notwithstanding the affected moderation of his views, it was impossible for Leopold to behold with indifference the progressive aggrandisement of the Helvetic states. By the retreat of Coucy he was in a great measure extricated from all his difficulties. The weak administration of Wenceslaus left him nothing to apprehend from

\* This transaction is related with considerable variations by Stumpf and Tschudi, but we have preferred the authority of Justinger and Stettler, as more satisfactory.

that

that quarter. The moment appeared favourable for the accomplishment of the grand project, which he had long meditated in secret, but from the execution of which he had hitherto been variously diverted.

Neither do the confederates, on their part, seem to have calculated much upon a permanent peace. Symptoms of jealousy were continually breaking out in every part of Switzerland, but particularly in the forest-cantons, and most of all in that of Schweitz. The approach of Coucy had for a while suspended every hostile feeling. Yet no sooner was the tempest past, than the current again resumed its wonted course.

In every period of history, we find the conduct of Austria invariable. Nor was she ever known to engage in a league, without throwing the whole burthen of the war on the shoulders of her allies. During the late invasion, Leopold had shown himself a perfect adept in this artful system. Secure within the walls of Brissac, he beheld the efforts of the Swiss with admiration, their losses with complacency. His conduct

CHAP. duct likewise, during the siege of Burg-  
X. dorf, was open to suspicion. For though  
he took no decided part in the contest, he  
allowed his subjects to act in a manner  
which was not only an infringement of ex-  
isting treaties, but a direct violation of his  
own specific promise. So strong indeed  
was the impression excited by this unge-  
nerous duplicity, that nothing but the ex-  
ertions of their leading men could have  
deterred the cantons from an immediate  
declaration of war. The new and exorbi-  
tant tolls imposed by Austria, to the real  
detriment of Helvetic commerce, proved  
another source of discontent.

About this time several of the German  
cities entered into a league for their mutual  
defence ; not only against those numerous  
bands of banditti, who infested Europe to-  
wards the close of the fourteenth century,  
but against persons of more distinguished  
rank, who had been induced by the confu-  
sion of the times to embrace the same li-  
centious course. Unwilling however to  
admit a principle, so highly degrading  
to their own order, the nobility affect-  
ed

ed to attribute these necessary precautions to a different motive; and, accusing the cities of seditious views, announced their intention of enforcing by arms their just prerogatives\*. This general spirit of discontent contributed not a little to widen the breach between the duke of Austria and the confederates, as both sides flattered themselves, in the event of a rupture, to be supported by a numerous and powerful party†.

Having previously concerted measures with the court of Wirtemberg, Leopold declared himself the head of the aristocratic league. The Swiss, on their part, thought it time to provide against the approaching storm, as in the present ferment an immediate rupture could scarcely be avoided. With this view, Berne, Zurich, Soleure, and Zug, concluded a defensive alliance with the united cities of Germany, which to the

\* This union gave rise to some celebrated orders of knighthood, particularly to that of the *Lions* and of *St. George*.

† May, II. xxvi.



CHAP. number of fifty-one had formed an association  
 X. for their mutual security\*.

A confederacy, so repugnant to the ambitious designs of Leopold, could not be beheld by him with an eye of indifference. But, as an open declaration of hostilities against so formidable a body would only rivet more closely the links by which it was connected, he prudently resolved to combat it with other weapons; and for that purpose took occasion, in his way to Vienna, to pay an unexpected visit to Zurich, in hopes of being able by artful management to separate that leading state from the general confederacy. During his residence there, he received deputies from Schweitz and

\* The union consisted of the following cities: Mentz, Strasbourg, Worms, Spires, Francfort, Hagenau, Weissenberg, Wetzlar, Schletstat, Achenheim, Friburg, Paderheim, Seltz, Ratisbon, Bâle, Nuremberg, Augsburg, Ulm, Constance, Etlingen, Reutlingen, Rotweil, Weil, Uberlingen, Memmingen, Biberach, Ravensburg, Lindau, St. Gal, Kempten, Kaufbeuern, Leutkirch, Yfny, Wangen, Buchhorn, Munden, Hal, Heilbrun, Wimpfen, Nordlingen, Dunkelsbuhel, Rottenberg, Windheim, Wyssenburg, Weinsberg, Aalen, Bopfingen, Geingen, Wyl, Pfullendorff, and Buchau. May, II. xxvi.

Lucerne,

Lucerne, who remonstrated in the strongest terms against the burthen of the new tolls. CHAP. X.

Ever studious to sow the seeds of dissension among them, the duke imagined that, a decided partiality toward one party, might give just cause of suspicion to the rest. He, accordingly, treated their applications in a very different manner. To the Schweitzers, he behaved with benignity and condescension: granting their petition, as he himself expressed it, "in consequence of his approbation of their conduct in not joining the league." But his treatment of the Lucerners was haughty and severe. No arguments could avail; no redress was to be obtained.

Perceiving at length that the Helvetic states were too firmly united for his artifices to avail, and wishing to secure himself against any sudden movement on the part of Switzerland, while the Germanic league continued in force, he proposed to the confederates a perpetual truce. This offer, however, appeared of so insidious a nature, that it was rejected by every canton with disdain.

CHAP. At this critical moment, the smallest  
X. spark would have been sufficient to kindle  
a flame. During the annual fair at Rapperswyl, a rumour suddenly prevailed that a detachment of Zurickers was advancing to surprise the town. The foundation of this report was never clearly ascertained, but the effect which it produced was instantaneous. The townsmen ran tumultuously to arms, exclaimed against the treachery of Zurich, and ill-treated every inhabitant of that city, who unfortunately fell in their way. Many persons of respectability were thus exposed to insult, who had attended the fair, as usual, solely from commercial motives. Having obliged their supposed enemies to save themselves by flight, they sallied forth in search of the hostile troops. But none were to be found. This, however, to them was no proof of innocence: it only evinced the vigilance of the foe. To such an excess indeed did prejudice prevail, that this escape was regarded as a signal instance of divine protection, and their

\* Stumpf, vi. Stettler, iii.

tutelary

tutelary saint was in consequence honoured with public thanksgivings. CHAP. X.

The system of forbearance, which he lately pursued, though by no means natural to the character of Leopold, was strongly enforced by every principle of prudence. Exhausted by the burthens of former wars, his subjects no longer concealed their disapprobation of hostile measures. Neither was the rigorous system, pursued by Austria in the administration of her provinces, when contrasted with the mild and happy constitution of republican Helvetia, calculated to inspire any violent predilection in favour of arbitrary government.

Perceiving that all remonstrances were ineffectual, and that the tolls continued to be levied with unabated severity, the Lucerners ran to arms, without waiting for the expiration of the truce. Directing their march toward Rottenberg, they arrived at a moment when the greater part of the inhabitants were gone to celebrate a religious festival at some distance from the town. In a moment the castle was assailed, and every vestige of a fortification effaced. It

H 2

does

CHAP. does not appear, however, that the council  
X. of state had the smallest intimation of this  
violent proceeding, till they were informed  
of the success of the expedition\*.

Not content with refusing satisfaction for this daring outrage, the Lucerners continued to brave the power of Leopold by repeated acts of hostility. Predatory incursions were daily undertaken to the total ruin of the Austrian commerce; while, in express contradiction to the late convention, they admitted the inhabitants of Entlibuch to the rights of burghership.

1386. Leopold was now so fully occupied with the affairs of Germany, that he was unable for the present to resent the insult. Yet, though deeply engaged in other pursuits, he was not inactive to the affairs of Switzerland, but endeavoured by the affability of his demeanour, to ingratiate himself with the aristocratic party, that he might subsequently employ it as best suited his purpose. At his instigation the confederate nobles, to the number of three hundred,

\* Muller, II. vi.

despatched

despatched heralds to the united cantons CHAP.  
 with declarations of war. These notices X.  
 were delivered in a general assembly, and  
 in order that the effect might be more im-  
 pressive the messengers arrived in regular  
 succession; so that one defiance was scarce-  
 ly received, when another was ready to be  
 presented.

Meanwhile the Austrian governor assem-  
 bled a small body of thirteen hundred  
 men, as a security against any sudden at-  
 tack.—Finding, however, that no attempt  
 was made by the enemy, he resolved no  
 longer to confine himself to defensive mea-  
 sures; but having entered into a secret cor-  
 respondence with the inhabitants of Mey-  
 enberg, he with their assistance, drew a  
 detachment of the garrison into an ambus-  
 cade, where the greater part of them were  
 cut in pieces. Terrified at this act of trea-  
 chery on the part of their fellow-citizens;  
 and not knowing in whom to confide, the  
 republican party abandoned the town, after  
 setting it on fire in several places\*.

\* May, II. xxxvii.

CHAP. X. The confederates suffered another fatal blow, through the negligence likewise of their commanders. Having collected a considerable force with the profoundest secrecy, Thorberg surprised the town of Reichensee, and murdered every inhabitant without distinction of age or sex. An action so disgraceful to civilized society, instead of producing the effect which the Helvetic Attila expected, drew upon him the execration of mankind ; and gave a character of ferocity to the war, which contributed not a little to increase it's horrors\*.

No sooner had Leopold accommodated all differences with the imperial cities, than he prepared for the invasion of Switzerland. His measures were now too public to leave a doubt of his intentions. The Swiss therefore determined to take advantage of the moment, and to annoy the enemy by predatory attacks, before any considerable force could be collected. During these incursions, several castles were destroyed,

\* May, II. xxxvii.

and

and many towns and villages sacked. No CHAP. difficulties impeded the progress of the <sup>X.</sup> confederates, no danger appalled their courage. Nothing appeared to them too arduous for valour to accomplish; and the presentiment of success almost invariably ensured it's attainment.

But in the midst of this brilliant career they were alarmed by the intelligence, that Leopold was advancing at the head of a mighty force. No period in the annals of Switzerland had been pregnant with greater danger. An alarming change had taken place in her general politics. Progressive improvement had, as usual, been accompanied with proportional corruption; and, in spite of all the lavish encomiums of national prejudice, it requires little penetration to discover in the conduct of the different cantons that interested spirit of calculation, which forms so essential a feature in the Helvetic character. Though repeatedly admonished to join the national standard, Berne had hitherto neglected to obey the summons,



CHAP. summons, under pretence that the truce  
X. was not yet expired\*.

Let us be just in the inferences, which we draw. The unshaken magnanimity displayed by the Swiss in the hour of peril must command the admiration of posterity, so long as an asylum is left for civil liberty upon earth. But while we sympathise with them in their struggles for independence, we cannot shut our eyes to those defects which tarnish their virtues, and occasionally degrade their heroic valour. Her absence from the battle of Sempach is an indelible blot in the annals of Berne; it is a stain which national vanity may attempt to conceal, but which no powers of rhetoric can palliate.

Having assembled his forces at Baden, Leopold proposed the following plan, in which he displayed the talents of an experienced general. A strong column, under the command of John de Bonstetten, was ordered to occupy the important position of Bruck; where, secure from the possibi-

\* May, II. xxvii.

lity of an attack, it might blockade the city of Zurich, and prevent the garrison from marching to the aid of the confederates. CHAP. X.

Two strong detachments were destined to cover Rapperswyl and Kyberg, which were most exposed to danger; while another column was posted to intercept all communication with Berne and Soleure \*. Meanwhile, at the head of a numerous cavalry, he was himself to advance against Sempach and Rottenberg, and after reducing those towns, to lay siege to Lucerne, which was regarded as the key to the forest-cantons.

Zurich having been hitherto the principal object, against which the vengeance of Austria was directed, the first idea of the confederates was to concentrate their forces in the vicinity of that city, as the most probable point of attack. But no sooner were they informed of the enemy's movements, than they penetrated his real design, and immediately changed their plan of defence. Having in consequence drawn

May.

away

CHAP. away the greater part of the garrison from  
 X. Zurich, they flew with alacrity to meet the  
 Austrians under the walls of Sempach.

From the inaccuracy of the German writers, we are left in our usual state of suspense with respect to the force of the aristocratic army \*. Nothing however can be clearer, than that it was greatly superior, both in number and discipline to the Swiss; and that it consisted chiefly of cavalry.

It was on the ninth of July, that Leopold appeared before Sempach †. The harvest was nearly ripe: and the duke in order to distress the Swiss, while he procured supplies for his own troops, employed his infantry in cutting the corn ‡. His cavalry at the same time approached to the very gates of the town, and with insulting mockery

\* According to May, the column commanded by the duke in person, consisted of 4000 horse and 2000 foot. The whole force amounted to nearly 23,000 men.

† This expedition is circumstantially described by Pictet, *De Bello Helvetico*. de Roo, *Hist. Autri.* iv. and by almost all the Swiss historians.

‡ The army are said to have been attended by a waggon laden with halters, which were to be employed in hanging the inhabitants of Sempach. Vide May.

commanded

commanded the burghers, who appeared upon the walls, to carry a breakfast to the reapers. "Our friends are bringing it," replied the citizens, with a resolution predictive of the fatal issue.

Scarcely was this answer given, when the Helvetic banners were displayed on the adjacent heights. The troops, which had been hitherto concealed behind a wood, moved firmly forward, undismayed by the superiority of the foe.

Leopold has been represented, by the partial pen of flattery, as a prince distinguished for military skill; and such, indeed, he appears to have been from the general plan of the campaign. Yet his conduct in the field, upon this memorable occasion, betrays rather the blind presumption of ignorance than the circumspection of a mind improved by the study of war. It is well known that, in those days, the strength of an army consisted almost entirely in cavalry. The men at arms were irresistible, when the nature of the country permitted them to act in a compact body. Yet apparently without a cause did he forego every

CHAP.

X.

CHAP. every advantage to be derived from a nu-  
X.  
umerous horse, by ordering them to dismount, and to receive on foot the shock of the Helvetic infantry, which according to the best authorities amounted to little more than two thousand men \*. Four hundred of these were furnished by the canton of Lucerne, and three hundred each by Uri, Schweitz, and Unterwalden. To these may be added some companies of volunteers from Zug, Glaris, and Entlibuch, who joined the confederates upon their march. Of this small body, few had any defensive weapons; whereas the enemy were cased in iron, and condensed in a firm and solid phalanx.

\* Some writers pretend, that Leopold was induced to commit this fatal error from a romantic idea of glory. Confident of success, he thought his triumph would be imperfect, if he owed it to the superiority of his arms. This is excusing one fault, by charging him with another equally reprehensible. Besides, the same spirit of enthusiastic folly would have prevented him from marching against the Swiss at the head of an army more numerous than theirs. We are ready to make every allowance for the characteristic weaknesses of the age; but an act like this would exceed the bounds of human imbecility.

There

There is something so singularly impolitic in the whole order of battle which Leopold adopted, that were it not attested on the faith of the most respectable authors, we should scarcely regard it as within the compass of human error. After having thrown away the incalculable advantage arising from the superior skill of his cavalry, which was composed of the flower of the Austrian troops, with an army three times more numerous than that of his adversaries, he waited patiently for the attack, and by his apparent irresolution gave confidence to the foe. "The Austrians," said the Swiss as they advanced to the charge, "have repeatedly tried our strength, and dread the havock of our halberds." This suggestion banished every idea of fear. Their countenance was firm; their march was rapid. Struck with amazement at so unexpected a sight, the most prudent of the Austrian leaders advised the duke to postpone a decisive engagement, till he should be joined by the detachment under Bonstetten. In those days, however, prudence was not the lot of princes. They disdained

CHAP. the lessons of experience: even the defeat  
 X.  
 ~~~~~ of Morgarten was forgotten. Besides, this sage advice was derided by the young nobility, who scorned to excel their prince in judgment, and were fully persuaded that the hour was now arrived, when Heaven had resigned a rebellious nation to it's long-merited chastisement.

There were not however wanting men, who looked forward with apprehension to the issue of the combat. John of Hasenburg, an experienced warrior, who had frequently witnessed the prodigies of Helvetic valor, after fruitlessly urging the expediency of declining a battle till joined by the other detachments, endeavoured in vain to persuade the duke to retire to a place of safety. A young nobleman, who was present, observed with a sarcastic smile; "It was not surprising, that Hasenburg \* should have a *hare's heart*."

The signal was at length given. The confederates, as was usual with them in similar situations, having recommended

\* *Hasen* in German signifies 'a hare.'

their

their cause to the God of justice, rushed CHAP.  
 impetuously to the charge\*, while the foe, X.  
 with protracted spears waited the shock.  
 So long as the hostile line remained entire, no  
 hope was left of victory. To penetrate this,  
 was the great object of their endeavours;  
 and in repeated, but ineffectual efforts,  
 much blood was spilt. Sixty of their bravest  
 warriors had already fallen, and the Aus-  
 trian phalanx stood unbroken.

In this exigency Anthony de Porte, a Mi-  
 lanese by birth, but who had been induced  
 by the love of liberty to settle in the vale  
 of Uri, cried out to his countrymen;  
 "Strike the spears of the enemy with all  
 "your might: they are hollow, and will be  
 "easily broken." By his own example, he  
 encouraged them to the attack. The shat-  
 tered spears however were instantly re-

\* According to May, proclamation was made at the  
 head of each company, *that every soldier, who felt him-  
 self unequal to contend against four of the enemy, had  
 leave to retire.* He further adds, that three hundred men  
 availed themselves of the permission, and retreated to the  
 adjacent woods, where recovering from their panic they  
 contributed essentially to the ensuing victory. II. xxxviii.

placed,



CHAP. placed, and the hero himself fell a victim  
X. to his noble ardor.

But there was a man in the ranks of Helvetia, who was destined to show what human fortitude can achieve, when animated with the pure spirit of patriotism, and unrestrained by the dread of death. Arnold of Winkelried, a knight of Unterwalden, had been distinguished by a contempt of danger from his earliest youth. In the classic pages of Rome, he had contemplated with enthusiasm the magnanimity of her earlier chiefs. The example of the Fabii was continually before his eyes. A fate, like their's, was in his estimation the noblest meed of valour. The moment was now arrived, when an opportunity was afforded him of realising all his romantic notions of virtue. He stood in the situation of the admired Roman, and could ensure the independence of Helvetia by the sacrifice of an individual life. He beheld himself, with anticipated rapture, the chosen theme of the recording muse. "To my country I recommend my children," exclaimed the enthusiastic hero, "they will soon have no father

father to protect them!" Then grasping CHAP. X.  
 the concentrated spears of the enemy in both his arms, he rushed undaunted upon their points, and crying to his astonished countrymen "THE RANKS ARE BROKEN!" expired.

This action was decisive. The Swiss pressed forward in a compact column, and having penetrated the iron wall made a dreadful slaughter among the knights, whose heavy armour and long spears were little calculated for close fight. A writer of reputation, in describing this memorable engagement, expresses himself in the following words; "The heads of many of the Austrian nobles were cleft asunder; others were knocked down with heavy clubs, while numbers, sinking under the weight of their armour, and the heat of the day, were unable to rise again."

In this state of desperation, when every thing was given up for lost, the general attention was directed to the safety of Leopold. In vain did his surviving friends represent to him the necessity of quitting the

CHAP. field. He rejected their entreaties with  
X. disdain. “I should deem myself unwor-  
thy,” replied he with noble enthusiasm,  
“to have led such gallant men to battle,  
“could I resolve to separate my fate from  
“their’s.” With these words, he rushed  
into the thickest of the fight, where he  
shortly met his fate.

Convinced that the fortune of the day was irretrievable, the count of Zollern who commanded the reserve, betook himself to flight. From that moment the disorder became universal. Personal security was the only object of consideration: even the very grooms and pages, who had been entrusted by the knights with the care of their horses, regardless of their masters’ safety, rode off in the general confusion. So that, in all probability, the whole army would have been cut in pieces, had not the victors been restrained by the love of plunder from continuing the pursuit.

Notwithstanding their propensity to a passion, so frequently fatal to the glory of Helvetia, fifteen standards fell into the hands

hands of the conquerors, whose loss was comparatively small\*. In the catalogue of the slain we find the names of Peterman of Goldeltingen, avoyer of Lucerne; Conrad, landamman of Uri; Siegrist of Tisselbach, of Unterwalden, and Arnold of Winkelried. Various are the exploits ascribed by the ancient writers to these heroes, of which we still read with pleasure in the popular ballads of Switzerland. An anecdote, however, is recorded of Goldeltingen, which merits particular attention. As he lay expiring of his wounds, a friend ran to his assistance, and finding him in the agonies of death, inquired with tender solicitude if he had any family-arrangements to make while he yet was in a situation to do it. "Tell my countrymen," replied the dying hero, "that Goldeltingen with his latest breath conjures them never to continue an avoyer in office for a longer term than one year. It is the advice of

\* Authors, as usual, differ; some pretending that it amounted to less than 200 men; others, with greater appearance of accuracy, estimating it more than double that number.

CHAP. "a man, who loves his country, and who  
 X. falls contented in having discharged his  
 "duty \*."

On the side of Austria about two thousand perished; among whom were many, descended from the most illustrious families in Germany. The day after the battle, the body of Leopold was discovered amidst heaps of carcases, and was buried with every honourable distinction at Konigsfelden, together with twenty-six of his principal officers. The remainder were thrown promiscuously into a common grave, with the dead of the victorious party, and a chapel was afterwards erected upon the spot, as a lasting monument of Helvetic virtue.

This was indeed a severe blow to the vanquished; and raised to an extraordinary height the reputation of the republican arms. Yet notwithstanding their recent defeat, the partisans of Austria were too severely wounded, to sit down contented with their loss.

\* Muller, II. vi.

Leopold

Leopold left four sons; William, Leo-  
 pold, Ernest, and Frederic. After the  
 death of their father, a short truce was  
 concluded, but it was no sooner expired,  
 than the eldest of these princes was con-  
 ducted to Baden by his uncle Albert, and  
 presented as a leader worthy to command  
 them, to a numerous assembly of the nob-  
 les\*. A desultory war was immediately  
 commenced against the confederates, and  
 conducted for some months with various  
 success. Animated by the presence, and  
 encouraged by the promises of Albert, they  
 began to recover their confidence. The  
 Swiss, on their side, omitted no necessary  
 precaution, which prudential counsel could  
 dictate, to secure the fruits of their vic-  
 tory.

The conduct of Berne, during the late  
 memorable struggle, was defended by her  
 leading men, on the imperious plea of ne-  
 cessity. The exhausted state of the pub-  
 lic treasury would in most situations have  
 been a satisfactory excuse for pacific mea-

\* May, v. II. sect. 29.

CHAP. sures. But this was no common contest;  
 X. no trivial dispute about the boundaries of  
 a province, or the regulation of a toll. The  
 independence of Helvetia was at stake.  
 Yet notwithstanding this apparent torpor,  
 the senate was neither inattentive to the  
 real interests of their country, nor culpably  
 remiss in preparing for war. On the con-  
 trary, they were in readiness to take the  
 field on the shortest notice, if tempted by  
 the prospect of an adequate remunera-  
 tion.

The occasion was not long wanting. En-  
 couraged by the flattering promises of Aus-  
 tria, the countess of Vallandis broke her  
 alliance with Berne, refusing the repay-  
 ment of a considerable sum, which had  
 been advanced to her in a moment of  
 distress. This flagrant breach of com-  
 mon honesty rousing the anger of the se-  
 nate, they sent a body of troops to ravage  
 her territory\*.

\* In a short time they razed the castle of Hasenburg,  
 burned the town of Willisau, and took Thorberg and Kop-  
 pingen, both places of strength, belonging to the count of  
 Thorberg.

For

For some time Friburg had been secretly preparing to revenge the losses, which she had sustained since the commencement of the war. With this view a considerable force was assembled, composed intirely of mercenary troops; which was destined, if possible, by one bold effort to get possession of Berne. Without interruption they arrived at the foot of the walls, and were about to apply their scaling-ladders, when they received a volley of missile weapons, which compelled them to retire with precipitation. In return for this perfidious attempt, the Berners made predatory incursions upon various parts of the enemy's domain. The castles of Dachsfield, Castel, Maggenberg, and Shonenfels, were successively taken and destroyed. The town of Unterseen, a feud of the house of Brandis, yielded likewise to their triumphant arms, and was spared only on condition that the inhabitants should swear allegiance to the victorious republic, and do homage in token of their subjection. Plaffey also, with the upper part of the vale of Siben, preferred the mild jurisdiction of Berne to the rigorous government

CHAP.

X.




CHAP. ment of William of Dudingon, their former  
 X. lord.

At the recommencement of hostilities, all the strength of the confederates was directed to the overthrow of those imprudent barons, who had prematurely declared in favour of Austria: and they so far succeeded in the undertaking, that several castles \* were levelled with the ground before the allies were in a condition to take the field. In the midst of these successful enterprises, an event took place which transferred the seat of war to a different quarter. The town of Wesen, in the Gaster, had been long an object of jealousy to Glaris. Its contiguous situation was particularly favourable for any desultory attack on the part of Austria; as during the severity of winter the Glarners were cut off from all communication with their allies, and even in the summer-months might be considerably annoyed, before they could receive any effectual succour; the martial

\* Namely Hohen Rheinach by the Lucerners, and Sultz and Mersburg by the Zurickers.

youth,

youth, at that season of the year, being CHAP.  
X.  
usually engaged on the higher mountains  in the occupations of a pastoral life. From want of proper attention the garrison of Wesen had been left in so defenceless a state, that the Glarnerers were struck with the possibility of rendering themselves masters of the town, before an Austrian army could march to its relief. No sooner was the project formed, than messengers were dispatched to communicate it to their allies, and to concert proper measures for its execution. The proposal was embraced with that enthusiasm which distinguished the character of the Swiss at this glorious period of their history. An armament assembled near Wallenstadt; and advanced against Wesen, which was situated at the northern extremity of that romantic lake. The suburbs extended to the very surface of the water, and were built entirely of wood; which, on account of its abundance, even in these days of architectural improvement, is almost exclusively employed in the mountainous parts of Switzerland. On their arrival before the town, the

CHAP. the confederates threatened to set fire to  
 X. the suburbs, unless the gates were immediately opened; and actually disembarked a large quantity of combustibles, which they had brought with them for that purpose. This was a species of warfare, for which the citizens were unprepared, and against which no efforts could avail. They in consequence requested a parley, and were allowed to capitulate upon honourable terms. The principal articles were, that they should thenceforth renounce their allegiance to the house of Austria, acknowledge themselves subject to the cantons of Zurich, Uri, Schweiz, and Glaris, and receive a garrison in token of submission\*. It would be a waste of time circumstantially to enumerate all the enterprises of a similar nature, in which the confederates successively engaged; and which usually terminated in the reduction of an insulated fortress, or in the defeat of a detached party.

Hitherto we have found ample cause to

\* Tschudi, Glarnerchronick.

mention

mention their moderation and humanity in terms of applause. The task of the historian would be irksome indeed, were it not relieved at intervals by acts of clemency.

CHAP.  
X.

PROSPERITY IS THE BANE OF VIRTUE.

Even in the history of Switzerland, a country separated by the partiality of nature from the corruption of polished manners, we already discover many melancholy symptoms of this degradation : neither is it without ineffable concern, that we behold it's natives hurried away by the current of fortune ; and after the conquest of Aristaw, a strong place upon the Reuss, in all the wantonness of cruelty hurling the defenceless garrison from the walls \*. An action like this might be expected from the savage ferocity of a Cossack ; but it is a stain, which we could wish to efface from the annals of liberty.

\* Stumpf.

CHAP-

## CHAPTER XI.

*Wesen surprised---Battle of Næfels---Siege of Rapperswyl---Truce with Austria---General View of the Confederacy.*

CHAP.  
XI.

**T**HE rapid progress, which the confederates were daily making, diffused so general an alarm, that the Austrian party was without difficulty induced by the powerful mediation of the imperial cities to agree to a truce during the ensuing year. But while the minds of men were convulsed by such violent passions, it was easier to regulate the conditions of an armistice, than to insure their observance. On the part of Austria, indeed, no inclination toward peace could be discovered. The negotiation from the beginning was fallacious, and the conditions were observed with so little fidelity, that this treaty

is stigmatised by the Swiss historians with CHAR. XI.  
the appellation of the *faithless truce*\*.

The heart of man is a compound of inconsistencies; and he, who attempts to judge it according to any regular theory, will frequently fail in his calculations. It was natural indeed to suppose, that the citizens of Wesen would prefer the equitable jurisdiction of the confederates to that rigorous system of government which had been invariably practised by the descendants of Rodolphus. Yet we find the contrary to have been true. A spirit of animosity always prevails with the greatest virulence between those who have the greatest interest in living together upon terms of amity. Thus, in private life, men acknowledge with reluctance the superiority of those whom they have long regarded as their equals; though they bow with submissive reverence to hereditary rank, even when unaccompanied by any of those splendid attainments, which can alone confer real dignity. Far be it from us

\* Muller, II. vi.

**CHAP.** to undertake to justify such conduct on  
**XI.** principles of reason; for that is a test,  
which the actions of men will rarely bear.

Convinced of the inefficacy of open resistance the Austrian faction, which comprehended a great majority of the inhabitants of Wesen, had recourse to treachery, that constant resource of timid minds. The governor of Windeck, and many others of their adherents, being sounded upon the occasion, professed themselves ready to undertake any enterprise, however desperate, for the re-establishment of their former government, provided they might rely on the protection of the duke. To this flattering offer, an answer was returned, commending their loyalty in the warmest terms, and exhorting them to persevere \*.

Though repeatedly warned that troops were collecting near the hostile frontier, the Glarners beheld the armament with an eye of indifference; unconscious that they were themselves the objects, against whom it was destined to act. Meanwhile the

\* Glanerchronick.

disaffected

disaffected party continued their preparations with indefatigable zeal. Austrian soldiers were introduced into the town under various disguises. The vigilance of the magistrates was at length alarmed. Conrad of Au, a citizen of Uri, who at that time commanded the garrison, applied for a reinforcement; while by the prudence of his conduct, and the popularity of his manners, he endeavoured to confirm the citizens in their allegiance. Though by no means satisfied that his apprehensions were well-founded, the Glarners complied with his wishes. Conrad, now thinking himself secure, called together the inhabitants, and acquainted them, that the Austrian forces were assembling with hostile intentions in the neighbourhood. He further added that, in consequence of this information, he had deemed it prudent to augment the guard at every gate; and concluded by recommending to them the most active vigilance, that they might be ready to fly to the defence of their walls, upon the slightest indication of danger; assuring them, that for his own part he entertained no apprehensions,



CHAP. sions, as a large body of confederates was  
 XI. actually marching to his aid.


This communication produced very different sensations on the minds of the auditors. The common people, ignorant of the conspiracy, were terrified at the approach of the enemy, and added greatly to the general confusion, by the means which they employed to prevent it. The male-contents, on the contrary, were delighted with the confidence of the commander; flattering themselves, that they should experience little difficulty in circumventing a man, who appeared to be lulled in such presumptuous security. They felt likewise that, in case the expected reinforcement should by any accident be delayed, the important blow would be struck before its arrival.

In this critical situation things remained till the twenty-third of February, the night appointed for the attack. So well had the conspirators concerted their measures, that upwards of four thousand men had been assembled in the vicinity of the city. The signal was given, the sentinels were surprised,  
 the

gates were opened, and the bridges were lowered. No sooner were the troops admitted, than they proceeded in small-bodies to the houses of the principal magistrates; several of whom, together with the commander, were butchered in their sleep\*. Others saved themselves from the sword of assassination, by escaping precipitately over the walls, and traversing the lake in such vessels as chance supplied. At their arrival on the opposite shore, they met a detachment of their countrymen, who were marching to the defence of Wessen. Finding, however, that their farther progress could be attended with no advantage, since they were too weak to attempt the recovery of the town, they retired to their own frontier; where being strongly entrenched, they confined themselves to defensive operations; watching the motions of the enemy with attention, and resolved to dispute every inch of ground, should they attempt to force a passage into the vale of Glaris†.

\* Muller, II. vi.

† May, II. xxxix.

CHAP. **Alarmed** at the danger which surrounded  
 XI.  them, they adopted every precaution to guard against a surprise. Messengers were despatched to the different cantons, imploring immediate assistance; and troops in consequence, poured in from every quarter: But, notwithstanding these reinforcements, it appeared to them judicious to apply to the enemy for peace.

Deputies were accordingly sent to the counts of Thorberg and Werdenburg, with proposals for a treaty. But they were received with disdain, and dismissed with conditions too degrading for a high-minded people to accept. For such is the folly of man, that he frequently throws away the most favourable combination of circumstances, merely because pride induces him to consider forbearance as a tacit confession of inferiority.

Nothing short of absolute submission would satisfy the foe. "Let the Glarners renounce their alliance with the confederates: let them acknowledge themselves the vassals of Austria, and in token of submission lay their charters at the feet  
 5 " of

“ of their lawful sovereign : let them pay CHAP. XI.  
 “ the arrears of taxes which are due, and  
 “ indemnify the allies for the expenses of  
 “ the war : let them give hostages for their  
 “ future allegiance, and we will in mercy  
 “ consent to spare their lives.” Such was  
 Thorberg’s insolent reply to their humble  
 supplications\*.

No sooner were these exorbitant demands made public, than indignation succeeded to terror. Symptoms of despondency were no longer visible. They had tasted the charms of freedom, and were prepared to die, rather than bend their necks with voluntary baseness to an ignominious yoke. Desirous, however, of preserving that amiable character of moderation which had hitherto distinguished their conduct ; they published a manifesto, declaring their readiness to admit all the claims of the abbot of Seckingen, according to the full extent of feudal dependency : nor did they refuse to the duke of Austria those legal rights, to which he could justly pretend, as the ad-

\* Mallet, I. 355.

CHAP. *rocate* of that convent. But with respect  
 XI. to their union with the Helvetic confederacy, *that*, they added, was indissoluble, and could never terminate except with their lives\*.

This resolution, however just and honourable, was very differently interpreted by their enemies. For by men taught to believe, that in the duties of a subject there is no alternative between passive obedience and open resistance, the language of reason must ever be treated as the cry of rebellion. All farther communication ceased. The destruction of the rebels was anticipated as inevitable; and over the ruins of Glaris, and the mangled carcasses of her citizens, the partisans of aristocracy hoped speedily to open a passage into the forest-cantons, that hateful mansion of democracy.

There was a plan of operations which, had it been adopted by the allies, must have led to undoubted success. But instead of harassing the Glarners by continual skirmishes, which would in a short

\* Muller, *ib.*

time

time have exhausted their resources, the event of the war was once more set upon a single cast. The same spirit of impatience induced them also to undertake the expedition at a season of the year, when most of the passes, through which they could penetrate into the enemy's country, were obstructed by snow, and consequently when every circumstance combined to favour a defensive system.

With respect to the strength of the Austrian army, we as usual meet with very different statements; but from the most probable accounts it appears, that the main body amounted to upward of eight thousand men, and was commanded by the counts of Toggenburg and Thierstein. Another column, under the orders of the count of Werdenberg, was directed to penetrate by a different route, and to unite with the former before the lines of Næfels, where the republicans were strongly entrenched\*.

As the Swiss had no fortified towns to which they could retreat, it was their custom at the approach of an enemy to march

\* Müller, II. xl. Tschudi, vii.

CHAP. to the frontier, and there select a position  
XI. the best adapted to that mode of warfare,  
which their peculiar situation imposed.—  
The narrow vale of Næfels was, in every  
respect, calculated for defensive operations.  
It was at once difficult of access, and easily  
guarded by an inferior force. Entrench-  
ments were in consequence thrown up, be-  
tween the foot of the mountain and the  
river Linth, which would have been impreg-  
nable had their force been sufficiently nu-  
merous for works so extensive ; but as yet  
it consisted of little more than two hundred  
men.

On the evening of the eighth of April  
Mathias Buel, who commanded this hand-  
ful of men, received certain intelligence  
that the following morning was fixed for  
the attack. He immediately despatched  
messengers throughout the canton, exhort-  
ing the women and children to retire to the  
mountains with their cattle and most valu-  
able effects. Other messengers were sent in-  
to the forest-cantons, imploring the assist-  
ance of that gallant people, by whom the  
call of honour was never disregarded ; and  
in

in the course of the succeeding night Buel's standard was joined by three hundred and fifty combatants\*.

CHAP.  
XI.

At sun-rise, the Austrians advanced with their usual impetuosity, and their usual indiscretion. The Swiss general, who had information that numerous bands were hastening to his relief, thought it adviseable to retreat, that he might allow them time to arrive. With this view he abandoned his lines, and fell back to an advantageous position at the foot of mount Ruti. No sooner were the Austrians masters of the entrenchments, than they considered their victory as complete. They separated into small detachments and plundered the country, instead of pursuing the foe. Every delay was of importance to the republicans, as their army was every moment gaining additional strength.

In all the combats, which took place during the course of the Helvetic wars, the conduct of the Austrians was repugnant to the dictates of common prudence, not less than to the rules of military science; and never

\* According to May, by nearly double that number.



CHAP. was the truth of this remark more fully exemplified, than in the conduct of this fatal day. After having allowed the enemy full time to collect their scattered troops round the standard of liberty, they were at once awakened from their delusion. Instead of a broken and disheartened force, they beheld with astonishment the hostile ranks more full and confident than ever. In haste they recalled their straggling parties, with a determination to renew the attack. With their cavalry in front, they now marched against a compact corps of infantry posted on an eminence, which from the nature of the ground, was extremely difficult of access. Eleven times did this unwieldy body return to the charge: eleven times were they repulsed with incredible slaughter. In a word, the event of this battle was similar to that of Morgarten, and in a great measure decided by similar means. Volleys of stones continued to pour down from the impending cliffs, till after a contest of five hours the affrighted coursers fell back in confusion upon the broken infantry. The Swiss no sooner observed the disorder of the enemy

enemy, than they pressed forward with re-  
 doubled fury; while the Austrians, sinking  
 under their fatigues, beheld with consternation  
 their enemies arise more terrible from  
 every attack. At this important moment,  
 a fresh column appeared on the adjacent  
 heights, which the fears of the enemy instan-  
 taneously converted into the vanguard of the  
 Helvetic army. The panic became general.  
 No efforts of the commanders could arrest  
 the fugitives. They fled with precipitation,  
 and were pursued to the very gates of We-  
 sen. Numbers perished in the flight, or in  
 attempting to cross the rapid Linth. To  
 add to the general calamity, the bridge at  
 Wesen gave way, and occasioned the death  
 of many knights, who sunk into the lake,  
 and were prevented by the weight of their  
 armour from ever rising more\*.

Meanwhile Werdenberg had passed mount  
 Kerenzen, without the smallest impediment,  
 and was certainly in a situation to have re-  
 newed the combat to great advantage, by  
 falling upon the rear of the exhausted Swiss.  
 But when he learned the disastrous fate of

\* Muller, II. iv.

his

CHAP. his friends, alarmed at the prospect of a  
 XI. similar destiny, he hastened with cowardly  
 precipitation to regain his hereditary states.  
 Thus in the space of a single day, was the  
 storm dispersed, and serenity restored to  
 the vale of Glaris.

Satiated with blood, the gallant victors  
 returned from the pursuit; and no sooner  
 had they regained their own territory than  
 they poured forth upon their knees the  
 warm effusions of their hearts to Him, to  
 whom they justly attributed their almost  
 miraculous success.

The loss of the Austrians, on this memo-  
 rable day, was severely felt. Without in-  
 cluding those who perished in the Linth,  
 or in crossing the bridge at Wesen, two  
 thousand five hundred fell upon the field  
 of battle. Among these we must particu-  
 larly notice Ulric of Sar, Bonstetten\*, the  
 count of Thierstein†, and John of Klingen-  
 berg. One hundred and seventy-nine knights

\* The best account of this battle is given by May, in  
 his *Histoire Militaire de la Suisse*, II.

† His father was slain at Sempach.

were

were found among the slain. The counts of Montford, Toggenburg, and Thorberg, were saved by the swiftness of their horses, but their banners, with nine other standards, were left in the hands of the enemy. These were afterward suspended in triumph, and a solemn festival was instituted to commemorate this glorious victory, which had been obtained with a comparatively small loss\*.

Spectacles of this kind, though highly commendable upon every principle of religious duty, are not without their effect in a political point of view. They keep alive a spirit of emulation far better than all the personal decorations, which in more mo-

\* Tschudi, though in general an accurate writer, has sometimes been induced to copy the fabulous traditions of national vanity. When we are informed that an army, for the most part destitute of defensive arms, was engaged in an obstinate combat for several hours against a superior force, we expect to hear of a considerable slaughter. But when we are farther told, that they escaped without losing more than fifty men, we immediately suppose ourselves translated into the regions of fancy, and either look for the horn of Astolphus, or conclude the combatants to have been dipped like Auhilles in the Styx.

dern

CHAP. XI. dern times are bestowed on those who render essential services to their country. For since the latter are not invariably set apart as the rewards of merit, but are sometimes purchased by less honourable means, they do not convey to the mind exclusive ideas of valour, or of patriotism. But it was impossible to be present at any ceremony, however rude and artless, which had been instituted to immortalise the worthies of Helvetia, without being pervaded by some portion at least of the heroism commemorated.

Convinced that their brilliant fortune would operate more powerfully in procuring reinforcements than any motives of compassion, the Glarners determined to take advantage of the consternation which their victory had spread, and to inflict signal vengeance on the inhabitants of Wesen. With this intent, they directed their march toward that devoted city, but found it deserted; for the Austrians who had retreated thither as to a temporary place of refuge, had quickly evacuated the place. Finding themselves thus abandoned to their fate,

the

the burghers had packed up their most valuable effects and fled. Giving way to their resentment the victorious army ransacked the town, and then set fire to it in different quarters\*.

Meanwhile the Zurichers, who were actually on their march toward Glaris, no sooner learned the defeat of the Austrians, and the destruction of Wassen, than they thought it unnecessary to proceed. Yet unwilling that their preparations should be thrown away, and confident of support from the confederates, who were arming in every quarter, they determined to profit by the occasion in order to strike a decisive blow. The town of Rapperswyl, under every circumstance of fortune, was the grand object of jealousy, to which the attention of the senate had been invariably directed. Neither was it possible for them to enjoy real security so long as that important place remained in the hands of their inveterate foe. But the duke of Austria was too well aware of the advantages which he derived from the possession of it, not to guard it with every

\* May, II. xii.

possible

CHAP. possible precaution. The fortifications had  
XI. been considerably augmented, and were defended by a garrison of seven hundred Italians, who were sent to duke Leopold before the battle of Sempach by his father-in-law Visconti duke of Milan. A large body of fugitives, after the battle of Næfels, had likewise taken refuge in the town, with the count of Thorberg at their head. Yet notwithstanding all the difficulties of the undertaking, the Zurickers having received considerable reinforcements, gallantly resolved to attempt it's reduction\*.

For three weeks they laid before the town, employing ineffectually every engine which their imperfect knowledge of war could supply. Desparing at last of succeeding by regular advances, they resolved, in a council of war, to risk a general assault. Thorberg, having learned their intentions by his emissaries, advised the citizens to surrender; for recent experience had taught him to believe, that there was no enterprise too arduous for Helvetic valour to achieve.

\* Tschudi, vii.

But

But the severity of Brun was still fresh in their CHAP. memory: without distinction of age or sex, XI. they declared their resolution of defending themselves to the last extremity, and of perishing gloriously with arms in their hands\*.

Meanwhile the confederates were indefatigable in their exertions, and resolved to attack the town at the same time, by land and by water. History affords few examples of a severer conflict. For nine hours did they return to the assault with unabating fury. Feeling that every thing, which can interest the heart of man, was now at stake, and convinced that nothing could be expected from the clemency of the foe, the besieged derived equal energy from despair. Men, women, and children, were equally active; whoever could hurl a stone, or wield a spear, now crowded to the ramparts, and courted danger. The scaling ladders were scarcely applied, when they were overturned. The boats no sooner approached, than they were sunk.

\* May, vii.

Towards



CHAP. Toward evening, the confederates retired  
XI. to their camp, worn out with the labours of  
the day. Every hope of success was now  
annihilated. Their bravest troops had either  
fallen in the combat, or were disabled by  
their wounds from keeping the field. To  
continue any longer before the town, was  
to expose the army to unnecessary danger.  
Nothing therefore was left, but to raise the  
siege; and accordingly, disgraceful as such  
a measure must appear in the eyes of a peo-  
ple unaccustomed to a repulse, they set fire  
to their tents, and retired with precipitation,  
leaving behind them the greater part of their  
military engines\*.

During the siege of Rapperswyl, a body  
of men from the Gaster made a predatory  
incursion upon the territory of Glaris; but  
the peasants instantly flew to arms, and  
drove them back with considerable loss.

Upon the expiration of the truce, the  
Berners with some reinforcements from So-  
leure marched against Buren, one of the  
towns which had been assigned to Coucy

\* May, vii.

in consideration of his mother's portion, CHAP. XI  
 but which was still occupied by an Austrian garrison. Being suffered to approach the walls, they threw combustibles into the town, the greater part of which was built of wood. Many houses speedily took fire. Alarmed at the rapid progress of the flames, the inhabitants made little resistance, while the enemy taking advantage of the general confusion, entered by storm, and put all they met to the sword. Elated with success, they now overran the adjacent country, destroying every thing with unrelenting cruelty. After burning the suburbs of Arau, they proceeded to Nidau, which was still garrisoned by Austrians, though ceded to Coucy by the late treaty.

John of Rossey, the governor, had been compelled, from want of money to pay his troops, to suffer them to live at free quarters. Possessing little more than a nominal authority over men rendered desperate by distress, he had connived at every excess, in which licentiousness could indulge, and allowed his soldiers to levy promiscuous contributions. Not daring to trust the

CHAP. fidelity of a people to whom he had given  
XI. such just cause of offence, he set fire  
to the town upon the approach of the  
republican army, and retired into the cas-  
tle, which was built in a morass. Not-  
withstanding the apparent strength of the  
place, however, the troops demanded to be  
led instantly to the assault; and so great  
was their eagerness to advance, that a boat,  
laden with thirty men, was sunk by their  
intemperate zeal. They were repulsed  
indeed; but such were the instances of  
intrepidity, by which they distinguished  
themselves in this unsuccessful attempt,  
that the garrison immediately offered to  
capitulate. The proposal was readily ac-  
cepted, and an agreement in consequence  
took place, that hostilities should cease on  
condition that the castle should be deliver-  
ed up at the expiration of six weeks, pro-  
vided it was not previously relieved. This  
condition was punctually fulfilled, when  
many prisoners of distinction who had been  
seized and plundered by the licentious sol-  
diery (among others the bishop of Lisbon,  
and the prior of Alcacova) were set at liber-  
ty.

ty. The conduct of the victors toward these CHAP. unfortunate persons was generous in the XI. extreme. The bishop and his friend had been imprisoned in their way to Rome, and stripped of all their effects. Their losses were now made good by the liberality of their deliverers, so that they now found themselves in a situation to pursue their journey with a retinue suitable to their dignity. On their return to Portugal, they not only repaid their benefactors with punctuality, but presented them with a thousand ducats toward the expenses of the war\*.

It would be little more than a tedious 1389. repetition of former exploits, to describe the burning of the suburbs of Mellingen, or the baths of Baden, both situated near the banks of the Limmat. A fruitless attempt upon Zofingen, a more successful one against Unterseen, and the capture of Gauenstein, near Olten, scarcely merit a more minute detail. Thence the victorious republicans advanced with little op-

\* Muller, II. vi.

CHAP. position to the gates of Bruck; while another party penetrated into the valley of Frick, and after plundering the country for several leagues, returned with an abundant spoil.

This rapacious system of warfare, though highly creditable to the military character of the confederates, was not equally advantageous to their domestic prospects. It is true, they frequently enjoyed the satisfaction of pursuing the enemy to the very gates of their fortresses, and of braving them within their walls. But while the hostile provinces were laid waste with fire and sword, their own fields remained uncultivated, their own manufactories stood still. For a time, indeed, the pride of conquest was alone sufficient to support the national spirit under every difficulty and distress. But the high price of provisions, the necessary consequence of neglected labour, began at length to be seriously felt. The people became clamorous for peace; and the leading men, alarmed at the prospect of an approaching dearth, began seriously

riously to consider the most probable means of attaining it. CHAP.  
XI.

The Austrian princes, also, for once appeared sincere in their desire of putting a stop to the effusion of blood. The losses sustained at Sempach and Næfels had deprived them of many of their most experienced leaders. Several illustrious families were become extinct, while others submitting to the imperious dictates of necessity, preserved their power by uniting themselves, as co-burghers to the triumphant confederacy. The count of Toggenburg had already made his peace. The towns of Buren, Nidau, and Wesen were lost. Both the Thurgau and the Argau were open to invasion. The treasury was exhausted, the people were discontented, the troops were disheartened: nor could the vanity of conquest any longer operate as an incentive to war, since the Austrian princes were of too tender an age to head their armies in person\*.

In this situation, the abbot of Einsied-

\* Stampf. Tschudi.

CHAP. lin, in conjunction with Constance, Bale,  
 XI. and some other of the Suabian cities, offered to mediate between the contending parties. The overture met with little opposition, except from the republic of Berne, which was induced, by private motives to dissent from the general wish. Their resistance, however, was of little avail. A truce was concluded at Zurich, for seven years, between the house of Austria and its allies on one part, and the Helvetic cantons (including Soleure) on the other. The terms were as follows; "that during the armistice the confederates should retain possession of their late acquisitions, whether arising from conquest, or from voluntary submission, with the single exception of Wesen; which was to be restored with the express condition, that none of the inhabitants, who had been concerned in the conspiracy against the Swiss, should ever be allowed to settle there. The sovereignty of the lake of Sempach was to be ceded to Lucerne, with the right of nominating a water-bailiff. Freedom of commerce was restored, and all obnoxious

"~~own~~ impositions were abolished." In return for so many advantages, the Swiss engaged, "not to receive into their alliance any subject of Austria, except such as *were actually situated within the boundary of their own territory.*" Finally, it was agreed, "that if any fresh cause of complaint should arise, ~~empires~~ should be chosen, to whose deliberation the matter should be referred, and by whose award it should be finally determined." This treaty was originally confined to the term of seven years, but was prolonged in 1394 to twenty more, and in 1412 still farther for fifty\*.

Thus ended the memorable contest between the house of Austria and the Helvetic states, after having continued during the greater part of a century. Hostilities, indeed, were renewed in the sequel, but the situation of the belligerent powers was no longer the same. Hitherto the Swiss had been regarded as rebels, waging war against their lawful sovereign. But success, which

\* Stumpf. xiii. May, II. xlii.



CHAP. in truth is the only equitable criterion of  
 XI. independence, had given stability to their  
 government, and assigned them a distinguished rank among the states of Europe. So that, at the recommencement of the war, we shall behold them in a situation to act offensively; till by degrees they became masters of the greater part of the hereditary possessions of the house of Hapsburg, on the southern bank of the Rhine.

The confederates had now attained the grand object for which they had been contending, viz. a formal acknowledgment of their independence from the house of Austria. Besides, by the late acquisitions, the territories of the different members were more intimately connected, so that their respective forces might in future assemble with greater facility, and act with greater effect. But as the advantages, which had accrued to the different members from the war, were in many respects local, it may not be unacceptable to the reader to take a separate survey of each individual canton.

The

The situation of Zurich, though apparently brilliant, was by no means exempt from danger. If we examine the picture on the brightest side alone, we are struck with the stability of her internal government; we behold a flourishing and extensive commerce, and regard the confirmation of her freedom as the presage of future prosperity. But a more minute investigation will convince us, that these envied blessings were held by a precarious tenure. Hemmed in on every side by the Austrian territory, it was impossible for hostilities to be renewed, without exposing her trade to ruin. Hence from motives of interest, the only ones deserving confidence in the transactions of nations, the views of Zurich were always more pacific than those of the other cantons. This was evidently the principle which directed her conduct, when four years after the signature of the seven years' truce\*, the senate was induced by the influence of the burgomaster Schon to enter into a secret negotiation with Austria; un-

CHAP.  
XI.

\* In 1793.

der

CHAP. der pretence of explaining some ambiguous

**XI.** articles in the former treaty, but in fact to strengthen the bonds of amity between themselves and their natural foe. Nothing could be more hostile to the general good of the confederacy, than the whole tenor of this alliance; by which it was stipulated, that at the expiration of the *seven years' truce* the Zurickers should not only not co-operate with the other cantons, in the event of a rupture with Austria, but *should even unite with the latter*. The duration of this extraordinary alliance was limited to twenty years; during which period, they mutually engaged to assist each other with the loyalty of men, whose efforts are directed to the attainment of one common object.

It is necessary to observe, that this infamous treaty was concluded without the participation of the great council, under the immediate direction of the burgomaster. A few of the most wealthy merchants were, indeed, admitted to a participation of his secret counsels; but they were men, in whose mercenary minds a spirit of calculation

culation annihilated every finer feeling. In CHAP. spite, however, of all their precautions, the <sup>XI.</sup> secret was soon divulged, and occasioned a general alarm. Every member of the confederacy became sensible of the contingent danger, and consulted together about the proper means of counteracting it. A deputation was accordingly sent to Zurich, to complain of this breach of public faith, and to demand an explanation of the whole transaction.

The people, in whose estimation the love of gain had not yet extinguished every noble sentiment, were no sooner made acquainted with the treacherous conduct of their chief magistrate, than they expressed their indignation by the most unequivocal marks of displeasure. With repeated clamours they demanded the punishment of Schon, whom they accused of having bartered the honour of his country for Austrian gold. In vain did he attempt to justify his conduct, and to screen himself behind the prerogatives of office. The council assembled, and ordered the instrument to be produced. Being informed that

CHAP. that it had been sent to the duke for his  
 XI. ratification, they resolved unanimously, that  
 before any decisive step could be taken, it would be proper to wait for it's return.

In a few days, the expected messenger arrived, and the act was submitted to discussion. Little deliberation was requisite to establish the illegality of the measure; so that a resolution immediately passed, annulling the whole negotiation, on account of it's having been conducted in a manner directly contrary to the established principles of the constitution. The assembly next proceeded to banish Schon, together with seventeen senators, for having usurped an authority unsanctioned by law, and farther ordained, that thenceforth no burgo-master should continue in office for a longer period than one year\*.

This indeed could only be regarded as a temporary remedy, and not as a radical cure. Every motive of policy concurred in recommending some more decisive step, as a future security against the ambition of

\* Teohudi, May, 11, 1711.

Austria

Austria. Sensible of their real danger, the confederated cantons therefore with the intervention of Soleure framed a *decree*, which as it's object was chiefly of a military tendency, and arose out of the consequences of a war immortalized by the victory of Sempach, was distinguished by the appellation of the **DECREE OF SEMPACH**. Like the fundamental bond of union, it's operation was general, and extended equally to every member of the confederacy. But in order to avoid the appearance of repetition, we shall content ourselves with laying it before the reader in the abstract only.

After recommending internal peace, and the most exact fidelity in the observance of all political engagements, and promising protection and security to persons of every description, who should thenceforth settle in the Helvetic territory; it proceeded to those regulations which were more particularly applicable to the operations of war. By the partial pen of national enthusiasm, this celebrated ordinance has been frequently represented as a perfect code of military

CHAP. military tactics. These eulogiums have  
 XI. been repeated by foreign writers, who  
 seem in general to have given implicit credit to the assertion. But after an attentive perusal, we can discover nothing beyond what the dictates of experience would naturally suggest to minds capable of rational combinations, and not totally callous to the feelings of humanity.

The recent struggle with the house of Austria had afforded such evident proofs of the ill effects arising from a spirit of plunder, that common prudence enforced the necessity of repressing it in future by every possible restriction. A reverence for places of religious worship, as well as gentleness toward those, whose age or sex lay claim to pity, are duties indispensable to all civilised nations, and tend to mitigate the manifold calamities, inseparable even from the least ferocious war. Union against the common enemy is next recommended in energetic terms. When summoned to the national standard, their troops were to advance in a condensed phalanx. No soldier was allowed to quit his ranks under any pretence

pretence whatever, without permission from his commander. Even when disabled from actual service, by the wounds which he might have received, he was commanded to remain at his post. From the nature of the arms made use of by the Swiss, strength of body was by far more essential than any of those scientific evolutions, which decide the fate of modern battles. Thus, in the memorable fights of Morgarten, Laupen, Sempach, and Næfels, we find the Austrian cavalry, trained as they were in the school of discipline, and skilled in all the arts of military parade, unable to withstand the furious attack of the Helvetic halberd. Long before the promulgation of the *Decree of Sempach*, the plain understandings of those unlettered warriors had suggested a plan of defence which was most conformable to their habits of life. To advance in a solid body, and to rally round their respective banners, was the only science which they deigned to study. Courage supplied the place of experience, till their early triumphs illustrated the advantage arising from a skilful choice of ground ;  
and

CHAP.  
XI.



CHAP. and proved, that in the hour of combat  
XI. there is no system so conducive to success,  
as that of confidence, courage, and perseverance.\*

It was not till some time after the commencement of hostilities, that the republic of Berne took an active part in the war. Yet the advantages which she derived from it, were far greater than those obtained by any other member of the confederacy. For this, indeed, the Berners were in great measure indebted to their position. Remote from the theatre of war, they were not only less exposed to aggression, but enjoyed the fairest opportunity of attacking the Friburghers, who were then cut off from all communication with the Austrian states. Most of the nobles, whose territories lay contiguous to the republic, were either subdued by her victorious arms, or induced from prudential motives to share her fortunes. The houses of Arberg and Nidau were extinct; and their rich inheritance had fallen under the dominion of Berne. Reduced to the last extremity, the

\* Muller, II. vii, May, II. xiii.

count of Kyburg had avoided inevitable destruction, by the cession of Thun and Burgdorf. At the head of the commonwealth were placed men of illustrious names, of useful talents, and of untarnished reputation ; who by the powerful lessons of example instructed their fellow-citizens, that the most sacred of duties was a zealous attachment to their country.

But as an uninterrupted course of prosperity is fraught with dangers scarce less fatal than those which flow from the opposite extreme, success had induced these enterprising republicans to embrace a field of action too vast for their limited resources. Thus by loading the people with unavoidable burthens, the government had impaired that implicit confidence to which by the wisdom of it's measures, it was so eminently entitled. Elated by recent triumphs, and the conscious pride of innate worth, the people began to question the prerogatives of birth, and to claim for their own eminent services some share in the administration of affairs. From trivial beginnings, this spirit of disaffection was

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gradually

CHAP. gradually diffused over a wider surface ;  
 XL  
 ~~~~~ till the aristocracy at length grew seriously apprehensive for the event. In the year 1348, several members of the council were accused of malversation, and condemned to banishment; in which number Buben-berg was included.\* But having found an opportunity of making an advantageous bargain for the republic in the purchase of some lands, he so won the people; that assembling tumultuously before the senate house, they insisted upon his recall.

These unfortunate jealousies, when once they had taken root, were not likely to be easily extirpated. During the active labours of a campaign they were indeed diverted into a different channel, and excited a spirit of emulation, productive of the most salutary effects. But no sooner did the fears of an invasion subside, than they burst forth with increasing violence. The growing debt afforded a never-failing topic for popular complaint. Alarmed at the approaching storm the wealthy citizens,

\* Stetler.

who

who had been hitherto forward in supply-  
 ing the exigencies of the state, began now  
 to consider the security as precarious, and  
 to employ their capital in more profitable  
 pursuits. Some, indeed, went so far as to  
 demand payment in a peremptory tone;  
 and thus reduced the magistrates to the  
 ruinous expedient of borrowing money from  
 foreigners at an exorbitant interest, in or-  
 der to appease their interested clamours.

In 1384 a proposal was made, in a gene-  
 ral assembly of the people, to institute an  
 inquiry respecting the administration of the  
 finances, and to punish those who might  
 be found guilty of peculation, with exam-  
 plary severity. Finding themselves too  
 weak to resist the current, the nobility  
 thought it prudent to temporise. By their  
 partial acquiescence with the demand, and  
 the surrender of a few of their privileges, they  
 effected a temporary calm, and persuaded  
 the people that they were now likely to ob-  
 tain the ultimate object of their wishes.—  
 But as soon as they had lulled the vigilance  
 of the popular party, many of the grants  
 were revoked, and every thing replaced

M 2

upon

CHAP. upon its ancient footing, with the excep-  
XL. tion of some trifling changes in the election  
of the magistrates. Thus by a sort of tacit compromise, tranquillity was again restored. Feeling that no efforts of their own could be essentially useful to their country, without the concurrence of their fellow-citizens, the Patricians did every thing to regain the public confidence; while the people acknowledged how much they were indebted to the zeal and talents of the aristocracy, without which even the freedom of complaint would have been lost.

From this happy period all animosities subsided, and every order of society vied with each other in a noble struggle for the public good. Ever attentive to the real interests of their country, the leading men took advantage of this favourable turn, to establish a decree, enacting, that every individual should contribute a fortieth part of his property toward the liquidation of the national debt.

The renewal of hostilities with Austria gave another turn to the views of ambition. That spirit of enterprise, which dur-  
ing

ing the inactivity of peace had been formi- CHAP.  
 dable to the internal tranquillity of the state, XI.  
 when directed in it's proper channel be-  
 came productive of essential advantages  
 to the community. The arms of the repub-  
 lic were every where triumphant; and the  
 vale of Siben, the town of Unterseen, with  
 the lordships of Nidau and Buren, were  
 successively added to her territory.

But in the midst of this fortunate career,  
 the horizon was suddenly darkened. On  
 the fourteenth of May 1404, a fire broke  
 out which in a few hours consumed the  
 greater part of the city. So rapid was the  
 progress of the flames, that more than a  
 hundred persons fell victims to their fury;  
 while the loss of property was immense.  
 Destitute of every means of subsistence, the  
 survivors wandered among the smoking  
 ruins, seeking out the body of some friend or  
 relation, who had disappeared amidst the  
 general wreck. But charity was alive to their  
 distress. From every quarter their allies and  
 dependents came hastening to their relief.  
 Food, raiment, money, were daily brought,  
 and accompanied with those sweet effu-  
 sions

CHAP. XI. sions of benevolence, which would have given value and importance to the most trifling present. The city was rebuilt upon an extensive plan, and rose from it's ruins more magnificent than ever.

Scarcely fifty years were elapsed since Lucerne had shaken off the Austrian yoke. Yet such was the benign influence of a popular government, that she already enjoyed a degree of prosperity, which in the days of her servitude would have been deemed chimerical. By the successful issue of the late war, her territory had been considerably enlarged; and Rottenburg, Entlibuch, Meyenberg, the vale of Ebikon, and Sem-pach were now subject to her jurisdiction.

Neither Uri, Schwitz, nor Unterwalden, seem at any time to have coveted territorial aggrandisement. Satisfied with the additional security derived from the humiliation of their hereditary foe, that happy people aspired to no greater glory, than to assist in the propagation of liberty, wherever man had the courage to assert his rights.

To Zug and Glaris the result of the war had

had proved highly fortunate. From the very beginning of it, they had broken their fetters, and established a council of fifteen members, whose decisions in all cases, both civil and criminal, were without appeal. This important change was, however, an almost unsurmountable obstacle in the way of peace; till the victory of Næfels removed every difficulty, and induced the abbess of Seckingen to accept an equivalent for the final renunciation of all her feudal prerogatives.

CHAP.  
XI.

The rest of the Helvetic people were divided in their political opinions, and adhered to the monarchical or republican cause, accordingly as inclination or interest directed; though it was evident, that the latter was daily gaining ground. Hitherto both Friburg and Schaffhausen had been devoted to the Austrian party; but the moment was approaching when they were to awaken from this shameful torpor.

Bâle and St. Gal, on the contrary, had omitted no opportunity of manifesting their attachment to the cause of freedom. Taking advantage of the necessities of Austria,

M 4

and



CHAP. and of the prodigality of their bishop, the  
XI. former purchased indemnities and privileges  
which were little short of perfect emancipation, and which speedily contributed to raise that opulent city to the highest pitch of prosperity. The latter also, instructed by the example of their neighbours, became every day more sensible of their degradation, and were already preparing to assert their privileges, and shake off the dominion of the church.

But none were so intimately connected with the Helvetic confederacy, as the citizens of Soleure. After taking an active part in the war, they negotiated with the house of Austria as an independent state, and shared in all the honourable distinctions of liberty. Yet if we examine minutely into their situation, and consider the line of conduct which they pursued, we are at a loss to discover the motives which could induce them to prefer their equivocal existence to an integral union with the Helvetic bond. Increase of power was however an object, to which their views were prudently directed; and, an opportunity offering, they purchased  
the

the lordship of Palm. This castle had formerly belonged to one of the barons engaged in the assassination of Albert, and was confiscated by the bloody tribunal. An acquisition of far greater consequence was also made in the castle of Falkenstein, which commanded one of the most important passes of the Jura.

A considerable time is elapsed, since we have found occasion to mention the dukes of Savoy. But our silence does credit to their administration. For while violence and pride directed the councils of other countries, these prudent princes continued true to their original plan, and persevered in that temperate caution, which has never ceased to form the characteristic feature of their government. The apparent danger of the Helvetic cantons, when attacked by the formidable power of Austria, threw a temptation in the way of ambition, which it required no moderate share of self-denial to resist. But they wisely preferred the rare honour of fulfilling their engagements, to the acquisition of a province obtained through breach of faith, and pilfered from  
the

CHAP. the necessities of a plundered ally. On  
<sup>XI.</sup>  
the contrary, they beheld the growing strength of Berne, without betraying any symptoms of jealousy ; while the Berners were not ungrateful for the favour, but assisted in extending the jurisdiction of Savoy over the romantic districts of the Vallais.

On the death of the count of Granson, who fell in a duel, his territory was seized by Amadeus, duke of Savoy. It is true, we are now anticipating a few years ; but it is for the sake of connecting the subject. The circumstances attending this extraordinary event, are related by Muller at considerable length ; and, as they serve to illustrate the manners of the age, we shall give them with some detail.

The castles of Granson and Estavaye were situated on the opposite shores of the lake of Neuchatel, and had been long the abodes of two illustrious families. Otho of Granson had distinguished himself, in the wars of those times, by many a gallant feat. In the decline of life he bade adieu to the charms of glory, and retired to his hereditary estate, resolving to pass the remainder of

of his days in honourable repose, Catharine CHAP.  
of Belp, the wife of Gerard of Estavayè, was XI.  
a lady equally celebrated for beauty and for  
accomplishments. Otho no sooner saw her,  
than he became inflamed with the most  
violent passion; which partly by persua-  
sion, and partly by stratagem, he found  
means to gratify. This illicit commerce  
was not long concealed from the vigilant  
eye of a jealous husband. But he dis-  
sembled his resentment, induced either by  
an unwillingness to publish his own dis-  
honour, and to disgrace the noble house  
from which Catharine sprung; or from a  
disinclination to part with a woman, whose  
fortune essentially contributed to support  
the splendor of his establishment. Though  
apparently blind to her infidelity, however,  
he brooded over his wrongs in secret; and  
an opportunity was soon offered to him of  
gratifying his revenge.

Amadeus, count of Savoy, died suddenly,  
while occupied in the pleasures of the  
chace. His death was attended with cir-  
cumstances which, in an age when acci-  
dents of that kind were seldom attributed  
to

CHAP. to natural causes, gave rise to a suspicion  
XI. that he was poisoned. Amadeus, count of  
Piedmont being the person most benefited  
by the event, was of course suspected of  
having hastened his end ; and as Granson  
also was known to enjoy his confidence, he  
was implicated in the imputation. By dark  
and distant hints, Gerard encouraged the  
tale, which designated his enemy as a mur-  
derer. Though perfectly conscious of his  
own innocence, Otho possessed too delicate  
feelings to treat the calumny with silent  
contempt. With secret pleasure he beheld  
an inquiry instituted by the king of France,  
the duke of Burgundy, and other illustri-  
ous kinsmen of the deceased, and shortly  
afterward enjoyed the satisfaction of being  
declared innocent by an honourable vote.  
Gerard, however, still persisted in his ma-  
lignant purpose, and having tried in vain  
the effect of whispers, he came boldly for-  
ward as the accuser, offering to prove the  
truth of the assertion in single combat.  
The high rank of the deceased, united with  
the brilliant qualities of the accused, excited  
a general interest, and attracted crowds of  
spectators

spectators to an assembly summoned by CHAP.  
Amadeus at Berg in Bresse. Gerard there XI.  
repeated his charge, and threw down the  
gage of battle. Scarcely had he finished,  
when Otho rose indignantly from his seat,  
and having signed himself with the sign of  
the cross, addressed the assembly in the  
following words:

\*“ In the name of the Holy Trinity, of  
“ St. Anne, and of her blessed daughter, I  
“ do here most solemnly give Gerard of Es-  
“ tavayè the lie. There are ample grounds,  
“ most noble lords, upon which I might  
“ defer this combat: viz. that we might  
“ have time to purify our souls before God;  
“ to examine our limbs, if they are sound  
“ and healthful; and to prepare our horses  
“ and our arms for the fight. Such delay  
“ however let him demand, who is ignorant  
“ of the bitter feuds which arise from pri-  
“ vate controversies, or who disregards the  
“ repose of his country and of his prince.  
“ For my own part, I pray God, that no

\* This speech is given as nearly in the words of the old  
German, as the idiom of our language will allow.

“ public

CHAP. " public calamities may arise from this our

XI.

" personal quarrel. There lives not the  
 " man, whom Otho of Granson fears. To-  
 " morrow—this very moment—most valiant  
 " knights, am I prepared to vindicate my  
 " honour, and to prove the falsehood of my  
 " antagonist. But what do I say? To  
 " show that I am guiltless of the crime al-  
 " ledged against me, I need only refer you  
 " to the testimony of the king of France,  
 " to that of the duke of Burgundy, and of  
 " many other princes of that illustrious  
 " house, to which the deceased belonged.  
 " After the most minute investigation, they  
 " have pronounced me innocent.

" This day have I reached my sixtieth  
 " year. To you, who were the friends of  
 " my youth, and my companions in arms,  
 " who have lived with me in courts and  
 " fought with me in camps, to you, I appeal.  
 " Know ye aught in the character of Otho  
 " of Granson, unworthy of his name  
 " and of his descent? Is there an ac-  
 " tion in my life, which can give colour to  
 " so foul an accusation? Kinsmen, and ser-  
 " vants of the deceased! to you, who were  
 " enriched

"enriched by his favours and honoured CHAP.  
 "with his confidence, to you I address my- <sup>XL</sup>  
 "self. Whence comes it, if such a deed  
 "has been actually perpetrated, that Ge-  
 "nard of Estavayè should be the only per-  
 "son to revenge your murdered sovereign?  
 "But I know the real cause of his invete-  
 "racy. I am no stranger to those, by whose  
 "secret instigations he has been worked  
 "upon to accuse me. Ungenerous cow-  
 "ards! If their cause were just, why fear  
 "they to assert it? But they are acquainted  
 "with the instrument, whom they employ.  
 "They know his weak and sordid mind;  
 "they know him to be capable of under-  
 "taking the most atrocious actions for a  
 "dirty bribe. With blind submission he  
 "executes their commands. He may find  
 "reason, however, to repent of his base-  
 "ness! I can have none."

After passing some moments in consul-  
 tation with his courtiers, Amadeus arose;  
 and having inclined his body toward heaven  
 in token of the profoundest respect, cross-  
 ed himself thrice, before he thus addressed  
 the assembled: "In the name of the Fa-  
 "ther,



CHAP. "ther, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,  
 XI. "amen. Imploring God to favour the cause  
 "of justice, we decree, that a single com-  
 "bat shall take place between the accuser  
 "and the accused ! Let each support his  
 "rights, and may heaven make manifest  
 "the truth!"

The seventh of August was appointed for the day of trial, when Amadeus promised to attend with his whole court at Bourg. The arms, allotted to the combatants, were a lance, a dagger, and two swords. These preliminaries being settled, each of them took the accustomed oath, and produced twenty-two knights as sureties for his appearance. The day arrived. From Burgundy, Helvetia, and the northern parts of Italy, spectators flocked in crowds. The judges took their seats. Granson appeared. Though illness might have afforded a satisfactory pretext for postponing the combat, he was impatient to vindicate his character, and too brave to avail himself of a plea, which he considered as derogatory from his established reputation. The rivals entered the lists. The signal was given. They  
 couched

couched their lances. The shock was violent, and Granson fell. Immediately after the death of their possessor the lordship of Granson, with the towns of Montagny, Belmont, and St. Croix, were seized by the count of Savoy, and united to his hereditary states without the smallest regard to the collateral heirs.

Whoever was hostile to the cause of freedom, had an undisputed claim to the protection of Austria. But fortunately for the happiness of mankind, the resources of that ambitious family, even under the greatest of her monarchs, proved inadequate to the magnitude of their designs. In their conduct towards Switzerland, their hereditary enmity to a republican government was still farther goaded by the stings of disappointed pride. But as success is in general the best test of political attachments, every fresh humiliation was invariably attended with the insurrection of a province, or the defalcation of an ally. The partisans of this potent family were daily falling off, as the monstrous system of feudal tyranny gradually declined.

CHAP. Liberty may be justly stiled the parent  
XI. of improvement. Thus, if we examine the  
internal situation of Switzerland, we shall  
discover a notable progress during the four-  
teenth century. Those seats of licentious-  
ness and plunder, which, secure under the  
protection of feudal privilege, had defied  
the control of law, were now no longer to  
be discovered. The avenging spirit of jus-  
tice had effaced them from Helvetia, and  
with them had destroyed one of the most  
fatal evils attending the feudal system,  
private wars. The barons, who were still  
permitted to reside within the territory of  
the Helvetic confederacy, were obliged to  
content themselves with a limited juris-  
diction over their respective fiefs. Their  
turbulent ambition was constrained to seek  
a more conspicuous theatre in foreign ser-  
vice. Prudence, however, had suggested  
to numbers the policy of exchanging the  
ferocious manners of a camp for the mild  
and social habits of domestic life. Thus  
we find many knights of distinguished  
fame, leading the armies of Helvetia against  
the foes of freedom, or presiding over her  
tribunals

tribunals in times of peace; and thinking it more honourable to fill the first departments in a small but independent state, than to languish out their irksome existence in the brilliant servitude of a court. Even John of Bonstetten, so long distinguished by his warm attachment to the house of Austria, and so often placed at the head of her armies, at length grew weary of the ungracious task; and, putting his castles under the protection of Zurich, he requested to be admitted a co-burgher of that flourishing commonwealth. Disgusted with the ill success of those plans into which a restless spirit had continually hurried him, or struck with remorse at the recollection of his former crimes, the count of Thorberg embraced the resolution of retiring from the world, and having converted his castle into a Carthusian convent, placed it under the protection of Berne. But an acquisition followed of still greater importance. Ego and Bertold of Kyburg, the only surviving representatives of the house of Zaringen, having been received

CHAB.  
XI.  


CHAP. co-burgheſs of Berne, transferred to  
 XI. that republic the landgraviate of Burgundy  
 with all it's valuable dependencies; and  
 retiring to their poſſeſſions in France,  
 ſought the protection of a government, the  
 principles of which were more analogous  
 to their own.

Few of theſe contracts were however  
 made, without ſtipulations in favour of  
 ſome darling right, which feudal pride was  
 ſtill unwilling to relinquish, and to the  
 preſervation of which, in conſideration of  
 other advantages, the republics were tempt-  
 ed to conſent. Hence aroſe that multipli-  
 city of local immunities and territorial cus-  
 toms, which diſfigured the chequered sys-  
 tem of Helvetic polity. But theſe are  
 evils to be met with in all countries, where  
 the feudal ſystem has anciently prevailed.  
 Great allowances ought undoubtedly to be  
 made for the weakneſs and prejudices of  
 mankind. Without a due attention to  
 theſe, no political reform can be undertaken  
 with the ſmalleſt proſpect of ſucceſs. Yet  
 it is to be regretted, that the timidity of  
 leading

leading men has frequently been led to CHAP.  
 consent to sacrifices, which they could not XI.  
 approve, and which by a more persevering  
 spirit, they might perhaps have avoided.

## CHAPTER XII.

*War with Appenzel.*

**F**ROM the distresses of the Austrian government, and the degradation of the great barons, the tranquillity of Switzerland appeared to be established upon a more permanent basis at the close of the fourteenth century, than it had ever been since the days of Rodolphus. But at the commencement of the fifteenth, a contest arose between the abbot of St. Gal and the people of Appenzel, which once more involved the adjacent provinces in all the horrors of war.

From the earliest period of its foundation, the abbey of St. Gal was deservedly ranked among the most celebrated seminaries of the christian world. From small beginnings, its possessions had been gradually

dually augmented by the prudence of its administrators, and the donations of the pious, till their extensiveness procured for its abbot a seat among the princes of the empire. Such likewise was the power and reputation conferred by this high dignity, that upon every vacancy the succession became an object of contention among the most illustrious families of southern Germany. Often too, as is natural in controversies of this nature, the successful competitor was more indebted to bodily strength and personal courage, than to the embellishments of literature or the mild virtues of christianity. Struggles like these were little calculated to inspire respect, or to establish authority; but they afforded to a people, at all times jealous of their liberties, a fair opportunity of curtailing the prerogatives of their prince; who, when seated in the episcopal chair, found it prudent to connive at innovations, lest by too rigorous a retrospect he might give umbrage to those, whose allegiance he was too weak to command.

The town of St. Gal, and the adjacent  
N 4 country



CHAP. country of Appenzel, were both subject  
 XII. to the jurisdiction of the abbot. The former, like many of the German cities, owed its prosperity in a great degree to the neighbouring monastery. In process of time, however, it had been raised to the dignity of an imperial city, and enriched with a variety of important privileges, which conferred little less than independence.

These immunities were originally granted at the abbot's request, and intended as a compliment. But they were afterward multiplied from other motives. Domestic contentions appeared the surest means of restraining the ambition of those warlike prelates, which, if left unoccupied by internal feuds, might become dangerous to the general repose. Thus had St. Gal successively acquired the right of coining money, of holding an annual fair, and of bearing its appropriate arms on an independent banner. To these may be added an exemption from all foreign tribunals in civil processes, from personal servitude, from the jurisdiction of the imperial bailiff, and

and from all fiscal contributions, so far as CHAP. XII. they regarded the empire. Finally, also, it obtained the invaluable right of being subject alone to its municipal magistrates, whose decisions, even in capital cases, were without appeal. Yet notwithstanding these repeated grants, the abbot still possessed a considerable portion of authority; and, what was natural enough in his situation, pretended to more than he possessed. A connection, so equivocal, could not fail to prove a constant source of disquietude. The more the subject was canvassed, the farther it was from being settled. Both parties grew more extravagant in their demands, and to ascertain the exact boundaries between prerogative and privilege, required a degree of moderation, which neither of the parties seemed inclined to adopt\*.

In pursuing the mountain-path, from St. Gall to Thurgau, a scene of uncommon beauty presents itself to the view. Clustering hills luxuriant in verdure, and in-

\* Simler, Tschudi, Muller.

terspersed

CHAP. terspersed with rich pastures and commo-  
 XII. dious cottages, break into a thousand land-  
 scapes, where nature has been prodigal of  
 her most romantic charms. Behind these  
 the Alpine summits rise in majestic gran-  
 deur, and elevate the mind to ideas of om-  
 nipotence, which our cultivated plains are  
 wholly incompetent to inspire.

From the earliest times, these happy  
 regions had been cultivated by a hardy race  
 of men, taught by liberty to encounter dif-  
 ficulties from which, under a government  
 where property was less secure, the heart  
 would shrink in despondency. According  
 to the intricate principles of the feudal  
 system, the legal sovereignty of Appenzel  
 was originally vested in the kings of France,  
 who were annually entitled to a moderate  
 tribute. It was pretended by the abbots  
 of St. Gal, that this right had been trans-  
 ferred to them at an early period; and  
 though neither the existence of the grant  
 nor its exact date were ever properly as-  
 certained, the claim had gained validity,  
 and was no longer questioned. Other  
 rights had devolved to the empire, which

was

was never backward in asserting them: and beside these, many of the neighbouring barons were in possession of various prerogatives, constituting jointly a heterogeneous form of polity, where among a variety of competitors for power little real authority existed\*.

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Such was the situation of Appenzel, when Cuno of Stauffen was chosen to preside over the monastery of St. Gall. Being naturally of an ambitious temper, he soon formed the project of establishing an absolute jurisdiction over the whole of that country, which by its unsettled state was exposed to every usurpation. Still however it was impossible for him to succeed, unless he could get possession of the prerogatives which belonged of right to the empire. To this therefore he directed all his efforts, and conducted his plan with such consummate address, that they were in a short time transferred to him by a specific treaty. He now looked forward, with assurance, to the completion of his hopes. But a

\* Muller, II. vii.

† In 1379.

constant

CHAP. constant series of prosperity induced him

XII

to neglect those prudential measures, which had hitherto directed his conduct. He had laid down a theory of government very favourable to arbitrary sway ; to which, without making allowance for the temper of the times, he adhered with inflexible obstinacy. His agents, likewise, were either purposely chosen from among men of similar dispositions, or modelled their actions after their employer's example. All the necessaries of life were taxed. The bailiff of Schwendi not only laid an exorbitant duty upon butter, cheese, and milk ; but also kept two large dogs, which were let loose against those, who presumed to murmur at the impost. The bailiff of Appenzel was guilty of acts, still more oppressive. Under pretence of the non-payment of certain fees, he caused the graves to be opened, that he might pillage the dead of their sepulchral ornaments, the last dear gift of filial piety. His extortions were insupportable. Industry itself had no plea for indulgence. Even the scanty savings

savings of poverty became an object of **CHAP.**  
taxation\*.

**XII.**  
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Accustomed to breathe the pure air of liberty on the summits of their native mountains, inured to fatigue from toil and industry, and habituated by martial sports to the show and image of war, the peasants of Appenzel were blessed with spirits free as the atmosphere in which they dwelt. Among a people, preserved by nature from the contagious lessons of polished life, the vices of refinement are unknown. Their virtues also are few, but they are untinctured with any of those factitious qualities which fashion cherishes, and which are scarcely distinguishable from their opposite defects. Prompted by the innate emotions of the heart, they practised charity, that purest precept of christianity, without knowing that it was enjoined by any positive law. Whoever was distressed, had a resistless claim to their assistance; whoever served them was irresistibly entitled to their

\* Muller, II. vii.

gratitude.

CHAP. gratitude. Though feelingly alive to every  
XII. warmer sentiment, they had little idea of those civil distinctions which have decreed, that for the exclusive benefit of one thousands should suffer. Addressed in the persuasive language of courtesy, they were mild and gentle as the stream, which murmured through their vallies: at the appearance of injustice, they rose indignant like the mountain-torrent, which foams and rages down the precipices of the Alps.

1400. By a people of this description, it was hardly to be expected, that the system adopted by Cuno should be long endured with submission. Secret meetings took place among those, whom age and experience had rendered objects of general confidence. It was agreed to sound the public opinion, and if their countrymen were prepared for the effort, in the example of the forest-cantons to point out a precedent. The inquiry answered their expectations. Every soul was incensed at the exactions of the bailiffs, who were universally compared to Landenberg and Gessler, and pronounced deserving of a similar fate.

fate. The people armed ; the strong passes CHAP.  
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were seized, and the tyrants driven away. These acts of hostility were accompanied with a declaration, that, till they received ample satisfaction for the injuries which they had sustained, it was their firm resolution to maintain themselves in a state of independence.

Though highly sensible of the affront thus offered to his authority, Cuno was by no means in a situation to compel obedience. Long had the monastery been a prey to those internal dissensions, which are too frequently found in religious communities. Domestic economy had been neglected ; while the profusion of mitred pride augmented the general embarrassment. Desirous of concealing the declining state of the order, Cuno had recourse to negotiation, that never-failing resource of artifice and dishonesty. At his intercession, the Suabian league undertook to mediate between the contending parties, and actually presented a plan of accommodation\*.

\* Tschudi.



CHAP. **XII.** The Appenzellers signified their readiness to treat, but at the same time they repeated their resolution. For their future security, however, they insisted that the magistrates, though subject to the abbot's approbation, should be chosen by themselves. No wiser condition could have been proposed. If complied with, it might have preserved inviolate the rights of the abbey till that fatal period, when no rights were any longer sacred. But the question was artfully evaded, and the people persuaded to lay down their arms upon a vague assurance, that nothing should be attempted, which was contrary to their ancient privileges.

Whatever may have been the abbot's intentions, his agents were little disposed to fulfil this engagement. They returned to their office with a decided resolution of making the rebels smart for their disobedience. Personal resentment being thus added to the innate love of oppression, they no sooner resumed their functions, than they seized the principal leaders of the popular faction, hoping by their imprisonment

ment to intimidate the rest\*. When Providence determines in its mercy that a people shall be free, it seems as if the government were irresistibly driven on to adopt the very measures, which are best calculated to excite resistance, and which can alone excuse it.

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So flagrant a breach of public faith excited a general ferment. Both St. Gall and the neighbouring towns were loud in their complaints; and judging from this treatment what they might themselves expect, should the abbot succeed in crushing the Appenzellers, they entered into an alliance with them for their mutual security†.

Exposed on every side to accumulating dangers, Cuno again resorted to palliatives; flattering himself by partial condescensions to appease the storm, and trusting to chance for the event. But as he absolutely refused to listen to any complaints against his agents, the insurgents easily penetrated his design, and discovering that his only object was to gain time,

\* Muller, II. vii.

† Id. ib.

CHAP. <sup>XII</sup> flew once more to arms. A formal deputation was sent to the monastery, requiring satisfaction, or announcing a decided resolution to obtain it. Too proud to comply, yet too weak to resist, the abbot was alarmed at this tone of firmness; and assembling the community, represented to them in lively colours the perils to which they were exposed, and urged the necessity of abandoning their splendid retreat, and confiding in heaven for protection. The advice was instantly adopted. The priory was deserted, and the church shut. All religious ceremonies ceased, all charitable donations were suspended. This hasty decision, which at first sight strikes us as the effect of despair, was in fact recommended by the soundest policy, and an intimate knowledge of the human heart. The minds of the people were not yet prepared for such an event. In his quality of a temporal prince, they felt no reluctance in opposing the tyrannical measures of the abbot; but in his spiritual capacity they still approached him with reverence and awe, trembling at the bare idea of incurring

curing the censure of the church, and of CHAP  
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being thus deprived of those imposing pageantries, which the pomp of Romish rites, when administered by so high a dignitary, has blended with religion to the delight and astonishment of vulgar understandings.

Repeated attempts were again made by the Suabian league to promote a reconciliation, and it was suggested that the abbot should appoint his officers from among the natives of Appenzel. But the question of taxation was prudently referred to the imperial diet. These conditions would probably have been deemed satisfactory, but the most material point, the alliance with the town of St. Gall, was still unsettled.— To determine this was a less easy task, as the people insisted that it was a right inherent in the condition of man to associate for mutual defence; while the abbot pretended, that such an act was subversive of his authority, and contrary to their allegiance. After much deliberation, however, it was finally agreed to submit the question to the burgomaster of Ulm; a man of that specious character, which generally

O 2

passes

CHAP. passes for virtuous, and who understood the  
XII. value of a fair reputation too well to part  
with it for a trifle. But the magistrate had  
been previously gained, and gave the following decree: "That both St. Gal and Appenzel should enjoy all their ancient privileges in the fullest extent, but that the league between them should be dissolved, on account of it's wanting it's most essential requisite, the sanction of the abbot\*." By this sentence, Cuno gained every thing, for which he had contended. For the St. Gallers, preferring interest to honour, were tempted to sacrifice a weak ally to the inconvenience which they suffered from the deserted state of the priory; and the Appenzellers, abandoned to themselves, appeared no longer formidable. But minds like their's were superior to the vicissitudes of fortune. During the summer-months, many of their young men had served under the banners of Glaris, in an expedition against Coire, in order to recover some cattle which had been carried away by force.

\* Muller, B. II. c. vii.

During

During this excursion, they had witnessed all the comforts which the Schweitzers enjoyed under the benign influence of a free constitution, and were prepared to risk their lives in pursuit of a similar blessing. Ideas of this nature were little calculated to promote a reconciliation. A messenger arrived with the articles. The people were summoned to hear them read. With mute attention they listened to the decree, till they came to the clause, by which their union with St. Gal was annulled. They could bear no more, but with a general impulse of indignation, unanimously exclaimed, "*We are betrayed ! We are betrayed ! and our only redress is in the sword !*"

Forsaken by those, in whom they had reposed unbounded confidence, nothing now was left them but their courage. On this and on Heaven they relied, determined either to obtain independence, or to perish in the attempt. Accordingly they dispatched messengers to the confederate cantons, imploring succour. By five of the

\* Muller, B. II. c. vii.

CHAP. cantons, who were unacquainted with their  
XII. resources, and who saw no immediate advantage in the connection, they were received with neglect. Glaris, indeed, left it's citizens at liberty to follow their own inclinations, and two hundred of them instantly took up arms. But Schweitz alone—Schweitz, who if she had possessed the ability, would have imparted liberty to all mankind—espoused the cause with ardour, and at the request of the Appenzellers sent Werner Amsel and Peter Lori, men distinguished for talents and integrity, to undertake the direction of their affairs, in the place of the bailiffs who had fled\*.

The abbot who despised the enemy in their insulated state, assumed a more haughty tone. Anxious, however, to preserve an appearance of candour, he deputed Ems, a confidential servant, to offer more moderate terms, accompanied with the promise of a general amnesty, provided they returned to their allegiance without loss of

\* Muller B. II. c. 7.

time.

time. The Appenzellers told the messenger, "That he was come too late; for  
"that wearied out with artifice and ill-  
"treatment, their destiny was at length  
"decided, and that they now belonged to  
"the Helvetic confederacy." "Your lord  
"will reduce you to obedience, and speedily too," cried Ems with a scornful smile.  
"We trust in God, and in our swords," rejoined the Appenzellers; and the knight indignantly rode away\*.

The decision being thus referred to the chance of war, the abbot invited all the neighbouring barons to join him in the field. The troops assembled, under the walls of the abbey, to the number of five thousand. The sentinels beheld them from the heights, and gave the signal for battle, which now resounded for the first time among the mountains of Appenzel. Having received a parting blessing from their parents, the young men quitted their native villages, and flocked to the defence of their country. About two thousand of them,

\* Muller, B. II. c. vii.



CHAP. under the command of Hartz, took post in  
XII. an advantageous position on the summit of  
the Vogelinsee, near the village of Speicher.  
Thence a road descends, through a hollow  
way, to the town of St. Gal, which is built  
at the foot of the mountain on the banks  
of the rapid Steinach. The declivity is  
rough and rocky, and in many places over-  
shaded with thick and tufted trees\*.

While Cuno entertained the commanders  
with magnificence in the monastery, provi-  
sions were liberally distributed to the  
troops, who passed the night in mirth and  
revelry. By the Appenzellers it was spent  
in prayer, and in preparations for the ap-  
proaching battle, which was to decide their  
future destiny. At the dawn of morn, they  
ate their frugal meal, and having occupied  
the most advantageous posts, in awful ex-  
pectation, awaited the enemy's attack.—  
With palpitating hearts they beheld them  
marshal their forces under the walls of St.  
Gal. In a regular column they ascended the

\* Tschudi, Muller, B. II. c. 7.

hill,

hill, and gained the hollow way, unconscious CHAP.  
XII. that a detachment of five hundred men from Schweitz and Glaris was concealed in the adjacent thickets. Unmolested, they were suffered to proceed. But no sooner had they passed the defile, than they were attacked in front by the Appenzellers; while the Schweitzers, rushing from the woods, fell furiously upon their rear. Their situation now became critical. They were surrounded by the enemy, yet were prevented by the nature of the ground from forming any correct estimate of their numbers, or knowing toward which quarter to direct their efforts. Judging however from their fears, that the chief force of the insurgents had been collected near the hollow way, they resolved to gain the heights, where the country opened, and afforded room for military evolutions. But scarcely had they advanced a few steps, when the main body of the Appenzellers appeared in sight. They were drawn up in close array, and had chosen their ground so judiciously, that their army seemed far more numerous than it really was. Their appearance

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ance likewise, was military, their countenances undaunted, and their forms robust.

The confederates now perceived the full extent of their danger. To retreat was difficult; to advance impossible. Nothing therefore remained but to attempt by an apparent flight to draw the enemy into the plain, where the superiority of numbers might prove decisive. A retreat was accordingly sounded. The foremost ranks fell back; and the Appenzellers, pursued, making great havoc with their bows and halberds. Meanwhile the rear mistaking the intention of their commanders, threw down their arms, and fled with precipitation to the gates of St. Gal. Availing themselves of the general confusion, the men of Schweitz and Glaris lost no time in occupying the vacant ground, so that the advanced body was completely cut off.

From this moment the consternation became universal. Nothing was thought of but flight. Some sought for safety in the woods. Others presented their swords to the victors, imploring mercy from a generous foe. Few would have escaped, had  
not

not humanity, and the recollection of former friendship, pleaded strongly in their favour\*. One instance among many, we feel ourselves bound to record. Hartman Ringli, being mortally wounded, besought his adversary, whose uplifted arm was preparing to repeat the blow, to spare his life: "I am already dying," said the bleeding soldier, "but I have a wife and infant child at St. Gal, whom I would fain embrace once more." "Thou shalt embrace them," replied the generous victor; and raising him in his arms, he carried him to the gates of the town, whence he despatched a messenger to his family with the tidings of his distress. His wife hastened to his assistance, and he expired in her arms†.

Elate with victory, the young men entreated permission to storm the town. But their commanders satisfied with the conquest of four banners, prudently restrained this intemperate ardour. Aware however

\* Upward of three hundred were slain, and among them several persons of distinction. According to Tschudi; the Appenzellers lost only eight men,

† Muller, B. II. c. vii.

that

CHAP. that the abbot would seize the first opportunity of renewing hostilities, they lost not a moment in providing for their future security, by destroying the castles of Claux, Schwendi, Sconenbuhl, and Horisau, with many other seats of feudal tyranny. They likewise made incursions upon the lands belonging to the priory, plundering and carrying off whatever they could find. Expeditions of this nature were attended with the double advantage of giving animation to their own troops, and disheartening those of the enemy. For they well knew, that to inspire respect, was the only certain road to a safe and honourable accommodation.

1404. Meanwhile the citizens of St. Gal, whose commerce had severely suffered from the war, grew urgent with the abbot for peace. But having sounded the disposition of Frederic duke of Austria, and finding that both he and the barons of Thurgau were inclined to support his cause, he turned a deaf ear to their solicitations, spoke contemptuously of the mountaineers, and in terms of unbounded arrogance, magnified his own resources.

resources. Perceiving therefore that no-  
 thing was to be obtained from the mode-  
 ration of Cuno, they wisely resolved to  
 provide for their own security, and made  
 a separate peace with Appenzel. Cuno  
 was so incensed at this prudent step, that  
 he again quitted the monastery in disgust,  
 and transferred all religious ceremonies to  
 Wyl, where the fraternity possessed another  
 fief\*.

The Appenzellers, on their part, were not  
 inactive. In order to secure friends and  
 adherents they established, wherever they  
 came, that system of independence, which  
 they themselves prized beyond all earthly  
 blessings. This politic measure produced  
 the desired effect. The cry of liberty re-  
 sounded from every mouth. All the pea-  
 sants rose in arms. But it is no less cu-  
 rious than melancholy to remark the signi-  
 ficat<sup>ion</sup>, which in all periods of history has  
 been attached by the unenlightened vulgar  
 to the idea of freedom. Among them, it  
 is synonymous with licentiousness: they

\* Muller, B. II. c. vii.

distinguish

CHAP. distinguish not between making the rich  
 XII. poor, and the poor rich. To an ungovern-  
 able mob the former is the work of a single  
 hour; but the latter unfortunately exceeds  
 the efforts of benevolence, and is contrary to  
 the established course of nature.

Meanwhile the abbot, whose solicitations  
 were strongly seconded by all the neigh-  
 bouring barons, became every day more  
 importunate with Frederic for assistance.  
 To give greater weight to their petitions,  
 they represented Appenzel as a second  
 Schweiz, but rendered more formidable by  
 the alarming precedent of successful rebel-  
 lion, and led by haughtiness of character  
 to aim at pre-eminence in guilt. They  
 added, that if by the supineness of Austria,  
 they were suffered to acquire strength, and  
 to incorporate with the Helvetic confede-  
 racy, no human force could any longer re-  
 sist their destructive progress, but that the  
 ruin of all feudal governments must speed-  
 ily ensue. However indifferent he might  
 feel to the interest of others, Frederic was  
 by no means insensible to his own. From  
 that moment he regarded inactivity as dis-  
 graceful,

graceful, and publicly declared his intention of chastising the rebels in person.

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1404.

The Appenzellers heard of these preparations with dismay. But as they were resolved to defend themselves to the last extremity, a general assembly was summoned to consider the properest mode of resistance. The people met. Suspense and agitation were delineated on every brow.

In this anxious moment of alarm, Rudolph count of Werdenberg presented himself before them. He was descended from the illustrious house of Montfort, which was now divided into three branches. Count Montfort, of the *red* banner, having sold his patrimonial estates to the house of Austria, no longer interfered in the affairs of Switzerland. But Werdenberg, of the *black* banner, had once possessed extensive fiefs in Suabia, in the Rheinthal, and in Rhætia. Freudenberg was his residence, the ruins of which are still visible on a hill near Ragaz. Few barons surpassed him in wealth, and fewer in reputation; but none in misfortune. For during a family-contest



CHAP. XII. contest with his cousins of the *white banner*, Austria, by artfully supporting the weaker party, and thus keeping alive the seeds of dissension, found means to possess herself of the whole contested property. John, the father of Rudolph, had borne arms in the Austrian service, and was entrusted with an important command in the war against Glaris. After the fatal battle of Næfels, he would have gladly renounced his brilliant situation, to have purchased the friendship and alliance of the victors: but mistrusting the sincerity of his professions, they rejected the offer. Nothing therefore was left to him, except to continue in his former situation; though in supporting the splendour of his rank, he was reduced to the necessity of mortgaging his lands and castles to the ungrateful power in whose service he dissipated his fortune. At his death he left four sons, to whom he had little to bequeath, beside an illustrious name and the purest principles of honour.\*

\* Tschudi, vii.

At his entrance, Rudolph was received with silent astonishment ; for his rank alone was sufficient to create suspicion in the breasts of men, as yet unacquainted with his principles. Remarking the effect which his presence had produced, he hastened to remove their doubts. In a short, but animated speech, he reprobated the cruelty and injustice which had invariably characterised the Austrian government, and from which none had suffered more severely than himself ; and then continued in the following words : “ I know that it is the duke’s intention to attack you with a formidable force ; and therefore do I proffer you my services. The honest are united by the bonds of amity, whatever may be their country, or their situation in life. The oppressed have one common cause to defend. A Montfort offers you his arm. Be that name my pledge ! for never did a traitor bear it. I ask not for distinctions : let me be like yourselves, a free peasant of Appenzel. Some military skill—I boast not of it—my past experience gives me. That,

VOL. II. P “ and

CHAP. XIX. "and my sword, are all which the relentless hand of despotism has left. But what I have is your's. To live with you, and to die in the same glorious struggle, is all that I require."

The Appenzellers were no strangers to the high reputation, which Rudolph enjoyed. They had often heard him praised for military skill, for integrity of character, and for a nice sense of honour. No sooner therefore had he finished his discourse than a general burst of approbation announced their welcome. Having taken an oath of fidelity, and laid aside all the distinctions of rank, he assumed the rustic garb and simple manners of a shepherd. From that day, he grew hourly in the esteem of his adopted fellow-citizens. Indeed, so strong was the impression of his virtues, and so unbounded the confidence which he inspired, that at the renewal of the war he was appointed to the chief command by unanimous consent.

1405. Notwithstanding his apparent indolence, Frederic was delighted with the opportunity  
 \* Moller

nity

nity of taking the rich abbey of St. Gall <sup>CHAP. XIII.</sup>  
 under his protection, and began to as-  
 semble an army early in the month of  
 June. Being immediately joined by most  
 of the nobles from Thurgau, he divided his  
 forces into two bodies. At the head of one  
 he appeared in person before the town of  
 St. Gall, which had declared for Appenzel,  
 and was defended by a garrison of four  
 hundred Appenzellers. The other body  
 was directed to penetrate into Appenzel  
 by way of the Rheinthal, and to attack the  
 insurgents wherever they could be found.  
 Rudolph was aware of their intentions, and  
 prepared to oppose them. With his little  
 force, he took post upon the Arlenberg, in  
 a position where he could watch the mo-  
 tions of the enemy, and be at liberty to act  
 as circumstances might require. On the  
 17th of June, the Austrians advanced from  
 Alstetten, with a view to force Werdenberg  
 in his entrenchments. The morning was  
 cloudy and soon turned to rain. A de-  
 tachment of two hundred archers was sent  
 forward to scour the country, and open a  
 passage through a narrow defile, by which

CHAP. it was necessary to ascend the mountain:

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As the vanguard proceeded unmolested, the main body was put in motion. Without opposition they advanced, but not without difficulty; for the rain had rendered the ground so slippery, that it was scarcely possible for them to keep their feet. Having suffered them to approach the summit of the mountain, Rudolph perceived the full advantage of his situation, and lost not a moment to improve it. A body of four hundred men was ordered to begin the combat. From the impending heights, they rolled down ponderous stones on the foe, who on account of the circuitous nature of the road were still below them. In spite of every obstacle however they persevered, though in some disorder, till they gained the summit, where they beheld the main body of the Appenzellers drawn up in a line. Rudolph gave the signal to engage. With sword in hand he rushed upon the enemy, and wherever he presented himself the ranks were broken. Every circumstance contributed to favour his attack. The Austrian bows were rendered useless

useless by the violence of the rain.\*; while CHAP. the nature of the ground operated strongly XII. to their prejudice. Yet in spite of every disadvantage they maintained the contest with a degree of obstinacy, which did honour to their military character, and which might have rendered the event uncertain, had not one of those unexpected occurrences, which are so frequent in the chance of war, decided the combat. During the heat of the conflict, a numerous troop, habited in white, was seen on the opposite hill. Supposing it a reinforcement from some of the adjacent cantons, and fearful of being attacked in flank, the Austrians fled with precipitation. Rudolph now pressed forward with redoubled ardour, and drove the enemy before him till they reached the banks of the Rhine, giving no quarter.† At length, satiated with

\* Some authors attribute the success of the Appenzellers to a precaution employed by Wendenberg, of making his troops pull off their shoes before they engaged, which enabled them to keep their feet, notwithstanding the slipperiness of the soil.

† Among a variety of instances, which national gra-  
P S slaughter,

CHAP. slaughter, the troops returned from the  
 XII. pursuit, and hastened with grateful hearts  
 to acknowledge their obligation to those  
 who had so essentially contributed to their  
 success ; when to their utter astonishment  
 they beheld their own wives and daughters,  
 who had rendered themselves the partners  
 of their glory.\*

Duke Frederic no sooner learned the  
 disastrous fate of his army, than he raised  
 the siege of St. Gal ; during which, he had  
 already experienced so gallant a resist-  
 ance, that he entertained no hope of suc-  
 cess. Directing his course toward Arbon,

itude has recorded, the following appears to merit the  
 attention of posterity. Ulp Rotach a brave mountaineer,  
 being surrounded by twelve of the enemy, disdained to  
 surrender. Having placed his back against a shepherd's  
 hut, he for a long time maintained the unequal contest,  
 defending himself with his halberd, till he laid five of  
 them dead at his feet. Unable to force him from his post,  
 the Aquitians had the baseness to set fire to the hut. Here  
 courage availed no longer. The rustic hero fell ; but  
 he enjoyed in death the consolation, to which his magnani-  
 mous soul aspired, of having never yielded to man. (May.)

\* Muller, ib.

garrison

he was surprised by a detachment from the CHAP. XII.  
garrison of St. Gall, who from their intimate knowledge of the country had gained a march upon him, and fell furiously on his rear, while marching in the greatest disorder. Frederic immediately collected his scattered troops, and presented battle. But his opponents, too prudent to risk the advantage which they had already obtained, contented themselves with harassing the enemy during their retreat.

Enraged at these repeated misadventures, Frederic burned for an opportunity of retrieving the tarnished honour of his arms, and determined to make one effort more, ere he finally abandoned the enterprise. Instead therefore of marching directly to Inspruck, as he before intended, he gained the Rhemthal with an intention of ascending the Wolfshald, and surprising the insurgents, before they could be prepared to resist. The plan was excellent, and might have given a fatal blow to the liberty of Appenzel, had not the duke indiscreetly imparted it to a young courtier, who enjoyed his private



CHAP. This courtier had a mistress, who possessed  
XII. his entire confidence; and that mistress a more favoured lover, from whom she kept nothing concealed. Thus, in a few hours, the secret spread through the camp; and one of the officers, who had a friend in the hostile army, found an opportunity to warn him of the impending danger. The intelligence was instantly communicated to Wardenberg, who with his usual activity took measures to defeat the scheme. Having placed a chosen troop in ambuscade, he fell suddenly upon the enemy, while they were ascending the mountain in full assurance of an easy triumph, and attacked them with such impetuosity, that they were unable to withstand the shock. Rallying however in a short time, they took post near a church, where they defended themselves with such obstinate valour, that the Appenzellers suffered severely before they were able to dislodge them. But, when they once gave way, the confusion was irretrievable; so that upward of four hundred perished in the flight. Frederic, who had remained at the foot of the mountain,

mountain, in proud expectation of seeing the rebel chiefs brought in fetters to his camp, no sooner beheld his troops pouring down in disorder, than he lost all relish for war. Overwhelmed with shame and disappointment, he took a hasty leave of the barons of Thurgau, and resigning the command to the count of Toggenburg, hastened to Inspruck, to drown the recollection of his past disgraces in the pleasures and adulation of a court \*.

Liberated from immediate danger, the Appenzellers and St. Gallers concluded an alliance offensive and defensive, for nine years. But such was the reputation, which the former had acquired by their brilliant exploits, that many of the adjacent towns and barons sent deputies to court their friendship and protection.

Werdenberg was the darling of his new associates; who, anxious to recompense his services, and believing every thing within the compass of their own valour, formed the resolution of restoring him to his hereditary estates.

\* Muller, ib.

After

CHAP.

XII.

After a march, in which they experienced little resistance, they were met on their approach to Werdenberg, by a troop of peasants, who hailed the renowned descendent of their former lords with shouts of triumph. Delighted with expressions of gratitude, which flowed spontaneously from the heart, and which bore high testimony to the virtues of his ancestors, Rudolph thanked them for their fidelity, in the honest language of a friend. But, at the same time, he signified a wish of resigning all his hereditary honours to his younger brother, and of passing the remainder of his days among that gallant people, to whose happiness he had associated his own. For having now accustomed himself to the pleasures and habits of a pastoral life, scenes of grandeur had lost their attraction.

Too soon, however, he discovered, that a series of uninterrupted prosperity, had vitiated the minds of the Appenzellers, and awakened them to views of ambition and interest. Disgusted at the change, he grew angry with mankind, whose brightest qualities

qualities are so transitory; and forsaking CHAP.  
the partners of his glory, he retired to a XII.  
cottage, among his favourite mountains,  
where united to one of the heroines of  
Stoss, he passed the remnant of his days in  
the enjoyment of conscious integrity and  
universal respect\*.

Having effected the reduction of Wardenberg, the victorious Appenzellers penetrated into the Thurgau, where they destroyed several castles belonging to the partisans of Austria. Thence crossing the Linth, they advanced toward the lake of Zurich, and made themselves masters of the vale of Wagi, and the lower marsh. This fruitful tract of land, on account of its situation, was of peculiar importance both to Schwyz and Glaris, and to them it was gratefully resigned by the victors. During this expedition, they passed unmolested through the territory of Toggenburg, although the count was then at the head of the Austrian army. The conduct of the Schweitzers in accepting the marsh, a pro-

\* Muller, *ib.*

vince

CHAP. <sup>XII.</sup> vince belonging to Austria, was represented by Frederic as an infringement of the treaty; and a complaint was accordingly made to the other cantons. Unable to defend the measure, and unwilling to renounce the prize, the Schweitzers embraced that profligate system of injustice, which too often forms the characteristic feature of a republican government, and boldly invited the other members of the confederacy to share in the spoil. Prudence, however, for once got the better of interest; and the apprehension of a war with Austria induced them to decline the tempting bait. Yet contenting themselves with the equivocal honesty of rejecting an offer, which they could not accept without a breach of every moral duty, they connived at the injustice of their ally, and suffered the Schweitzers to remain in tranquil possession of their usurpation\*.

1406. Early in the ensuing spring, the Appenzellers again invaded the Austrian territory. Feldkirk was carried by storm, and

\* Muller, *ib.*

Montfort burnt; Tosters was also destroyed with wanton cruelty, and Pludenz regularly besieged. Convinced by their own feelings, that ideas of restriction are repugnant to the nature of man, they adopted a system far the most dangerous to all social establishments, that the genius of wickedness ever devised. Substituting the appellation of *deliverers* for that of *conquerors*, they impudently declared, that the object of their pursuit was not to reduce the neighbouring provinces under their own dominion, but to liberate them from the shackles of feudal tyranny. Man is the slave of impressions. The fiction, however gross, succeeded. Wherever they directed their destructive course, they were welcomed by the deluded people with open arms; and all their mandates, however absolute, were obeyed with implicit deference, because delivered in the captivating language of fraternal advice.

During the siege of Pludenz, intelligence was brought, that in many parts of the Tyrol, the natives had risen in arms, and waited only for their charitable succour,

to

CHAP.  
XII.

CHAP. to burst their bonds. Upon hearing that  
 XII. these happy mountaineers were ripe for the  
 great work of regeneration, they dispatched  
 a messenger to Appenzel with the following  
 address, in which the enthusiasm of liberty,  
 and the cant which sometimes accompanies it,  
 are equally conspicuous. "We  
 "are before Pludenz, and God is with us.  
 "If there be any of our brave country-  
 "men, whose presence is not necessary for  
 "the support of an aged parent, let him  
 "instantly join our standard, and share  
 "with us in the unexampled glory of giv-  
 "ing liberty to the Tyrolese\*."

The natural history of the Tyrol is too  
 familiar to every reader of taste and ob-  
 servation, for any elaborate description to  
 be requisite. We shall therefore content  
 ourselves with observing, that as the moral  
 character of man is in a great degree de-  
 termined by the nature of the country  
 which he inhabits, the natives of the highest  
 Alps are in general distinguished by those  
 bold and striking features, which are bet-

Muller, ib.

ter

ter calculated to command admiration than CHAP:  
to inspire love. Acquainted with the real <sup>XII.</sup>  
value of this important province, the Aus-  
trian princes had always treated the Tyro-  
lese with marked affection, and had met  
in return with that fidelity, which is a so-  
vereign's noblest eulogium. Even in the  
best-constituted governments, however, sub-  
jects of discontent must occasionally arise;  
and that the dominion of Austria was not  
of this description, the specimens already  
produced will abundantly testify.

Learning the intentions of the Appen-  
zelliers, Frederic collected his veteran  
bands, and marched to Landeck, with a  
resolution to defend that important pass.  
But success had taught the enemy to be ir-  
resistible. After a severe conflict, the  
Austrians gave way, and left the Tyrol  
open to invasion. Preceded by the fame  
of their exploits, and the poison of their  
doctrines, the march of the republican  
forces exhibited one continued scene of  
triumph. Wherever they came, festivals  
were prepared to celebrate their arrival.  
The echoes of the hills repeated the cry of  
liberty,



CHAP. liberty, and the populace, because they  
XII. were suffered to indulge in every excess,  
persuaded themselves that they were free.  
With such rapidity did they proceed in the  
romantic task of giving liberty to mankind,  
that it would have been difficult to set  
bounds to their career, had they not been  
suddenly recalled to the defence of their  
native land, which, amidst their splendid  
visions of universal philanthropy, seemed  
to have been wholly forgotten.

Alarmed at her danger, they hastened  
to her relief with surprising celerity. But  
no sooner had they crossed the Arlenberg,  
than the impending storm was dissipated.  
The terror of their name effected the deli-  
very of Appenzel, without the assistance  
of their swords. Satisfied for the present  
with an abundant harvest of glory, the  
victorious band returned once more to their  
accustomed labours. Their booty was con-  
siderable ; and might have been infinitely  
more so, had they not disdainfully rejected  
every article, which was not useful in do-  
mestic economy. The precious metals they  
distributed with the liberality of savages,  
or

or the wisdom of philosophers, (for in this CHAP. instance, at least, there is little difference) <sup>XIII</sup> declaring, that "milk and wine tasted "sweetest out of wooden bowls." But the banners, which they had won, they preserved with religious veneration, as a public treasure, which formed at once the pride and the ornament of the community\*.

The Appenzellers had been too long ac- 1407, customed to the licentiousness of a military life, to relish the tranquil pleasures of domestic retirement, which, in the days of their innocence, had constituted their chief happiness. To a people desirous of making war, a pretence can never long be wanting, and even the absence of the abbot afforded one. Taking arms, therefore, they signified their intention of compelling him to return to the monastery; there to resume those functions, which as a minister of the gospel he was bound to perform. Being joined by numbers from the adjacent cantons, they set out on this holy

\* Muller, *ibid.*

CHAP. mission, and arrived without opposition at  
 XII. Wyl.

Instructed by the calamities of other towns, the inhabitants shewed little inclination to resist. The unfortunate prelate was now abandoned to his destiny; and being conscious how little he deserved from the compassion of his enemies, he gave way to the bitterness of grief, and looked forward to inevitable death. At this distressing moment, he received a message from the citizens, declaring their inability to defend the town, and requesting him to put an end to their sufferings by consenting to the just demands of his subjects. Though their wishes were communicated in language, not very remote from commands, Cuno still hesitated to comply. A conference took place between the townsmen and the army, the result of which was, that the gates were opened, on condition that property of all kinds should be respected\*.

Cuno was now informed, that it was the

\* Muller, ib.

intention

intention of his subjects to conduct him to his proper residence. The tone was peremptory, and no choice was left. Recommending himself therefore to the protection of all the heavenly host, with his arms meekly folded across his breast, and his eyes cast down in humiliation, he presented himself before those very men, whom for the space of twenty-eight years he had regarded only in the light of slaves. His head was grey and uncovered, his figure pale and emaciated, his step slow and uncertain. On his appearance a spontaneous emotion of pity burst from the spectators, and proved that all the violence of faction had not yet eradicated sympathy from their breasts. They no longer viewed, in their degraded prince, a tyrannical oppressor, but rather commiserated the weakness of character, which had rendered him the easy tool of other men's ambition. Some indeed there were, who regarded compassion for prostrate greatness as below the stoic dignity of republicanism; but the indignation of the multitude quickly curbed their licentious tongues, and taught them

Q 2

that

CHAP. that nothing is so unworthy of courage as  
XII. to insult the fallen. With respectful at-  
tention they seated him upon his mule, and  
conducted him to the monastery of St. Gal;  
where a treaty was concluded (dictated prob-  
ably rather by necessity than inclination)  
by which he placed himself and his remain-  
ing territory under the protection of that  
very people, whom he had so long treated  
as rebels, and laboured to exterminate\*.

Their next object was, to punish the  
duke of Austria for the decided part which  
he had taken in the support of aristocracy.  
In pursuit of this, they invaded the Thur-  
gau, menaced Constance, and laid waste  
the episcopal territory, as the bishop, by  
a hasty sentence of excommunication, had  
imprudently incurred their resentment.  
Directing their course toward Kyburg, they  
levied contributions wherever they came,  
destroyed several castles belonging to ba-  
rons of the adverse party, and compelled  
their haughty chiefs to subscribe to what-  
ever conditions they thought fit to impose.

Muller, ib.

The

The alarm became universal. Exhaust- CHAP.  
 ed by the burthen of former wars, and XII.  
 trembling at the calamities, which seemed  
 now to threaten them, many of the adja-  
 cent barons were happy in an opportunity  
 of parting with their estates upon any terms,  
 which their conquerors were pleased to pre-  
 scribe; while Zurich, ever attentive to her  
 real interests, availed herself of the oca-  
 sion to make many valuable purchases.\*

Several of the Austrian towns likewise  
 applied to that city for protection and sup-  
 port. Mortified that so valuable prizes  
 should have escaped them, the Appen-  
 zellers gave way to a spirit of violence un-  
 worthy of their former character, and ra-  
 vaged the country with unrelenting cruelty.  
 In the midst of these destructive triumphs,  
 a report arrived, that an Austrian column  
 had crossed the Rhine, and was advancing  
 toward the frontier of Appenzel. Without  
 a moment's hesitation they abandoned their  
 conquests, and hastened to meet them, with  
 a firm resolution of giving them battle.

\* Bulach, Regensberg, and Winterthur.

CHAP. <sup>XII</sup> But this expedition, like most of those which were undertaken against the liberties of Switzerland, was either planned with so little intelligence, or entrusted to the conduct of such inexperienced chiefs, that the army had repassed the Rhine, before the Appenzellers could bring them to action.

The cold had set in with unusual rigour; yet as it appeared probable that the enemy, who were at no time remarkable for vigilance, would now abandon themselves entirely to the security of the season, they resolved to make another attempt, before they retired to winter-quarters. Taking advantage of a deep snow, they crossed the lake of Constance, and appeared on a sudden before Bruggentz, a town too strongly fortified to have any thing to fear, except from the negligence of the garrison.

1408. Foiled in the attempt to surprise the town, the assailants determined to reduce it by a regular siege, and would probably have succeeded in the undertaking, had it not been unexpectedly relieved. In resentment of this attack, the adjacent barons

rons assembled an army of eight thousand men, and crossing the lake in a thick fog, fell unexpectedly upon the besiegers. The superiority of numbers was so decisive, that no efforts of valour could avail. The Appenzellers were completely routed after the first shock, and fled in the utmost confusion, leaving every thing except their banner behind\*.

Their force being in a great degree founded upon opinion, this defeat was attended with fatal consequences. Several towns, which had courted their alliance from motives of fear, forsook them on the first appearance of adverse fortune: nor was the depression produced upon their own feelings by this momentary vicissitude less remarkable. The time seemed favourable for negotiation, and was accordingly seized on by Rupert, who had succeeded to the imperial throne, upon the deposition of the profligate Wenceslaus, in 1400. Having previously arranged the general outlines of a treaty, he summoned the contending parties

\* Tschudi.



CHAP. to send deputies to Constance. To this pro-  
XII. posal the duke of Austria and his adherents readily consented. The Appenzellers also acceded with little opposition, by the secret advice of the Schweitzers, and under the firm assurance that the other cantons were determined not to interfere in their favour.

The congress being assembled, Rupert reprimanded the delegates of St. Gall and Appenzel, in terms of great severity, for their contumacious behaviour toward their lawful sovereign. He then proceeded to annul their alliance, pronouncing it not only subversive of the just prerogatives of the church, but totally inconsistent with the allegiance due to the imperial crown. He farther decreed, that all prisoners should be released without ransom, and the conquered territories restored to their legitimate owners; but that none of the fortresses, which had been demolished, should be rebuilt without *his* express permission. The Appenzellers, on their part, obtained absolution from all ecclesiastical interdicts and civil bans; and a truce for two years was concluded between them and the duke

of Austria, leaving all disputed claims, even those of the count of Werdenberg, open for future discussion\*.

Thus ended the war between the Appenzellers and the abbot of St. Gal, which, from the misconduct of the latter, threatened to excite a general insurrection against the tyranny of the feudal government.

Several points in dispute remaining still undetermined, the emperor summoned the contending parties to appear before him at Heidelberg. To this the abbot readily consented; but the Appenzellers were too well acquainted with the real value of liberty, to trust to the decision of so partial a judge. Exasperated at the contempt, to which his authority was exposed by this open neglect of his commands, Rupert resolved by the energy of his conduct to retrieve the imperial character, and proceeded accordingly to issue against the Appenzellers a sentence of contumacy. But they had already proceeded too far, to be

\* Walser.

awed

CHAP. awed into acquiescence by ideal terrors.

XII.

Instead of manifesting the smallest inclination to yield, they boldly signified their determination of defending their liberties to the last extremity. Little indeed could it be expected, that a people once engaged in so honourable a contest, should tamely forego the advantages so dearly purchased, and submit without an effort to the fetters of their ancient vassalage.

1410.

The Appenzellers still persisting in their refusal to restore the Reinthal, the truce was no sooner expired, than the Austrian princes prepared for war. The count of Sultz, with a formidable force, advanced toward their confines ; but their troops retired at his approach, choosing rather to abandon Rheineck to the mercy of the conqueror, than expose themselves to the risk which must attend any effort to relieve it. The garrison however, after a brave resistance, finding that their provisions began to fail, cut a passage through the enemy's line, and gained the frontier of Appenzel,

Appenzel, without sustaining any material loss\*.

CHAP.  
XII.

Encouraged by the first dawnings of a more prosperous fortune, Frederic put himself at the head of twelve thousand men, and sat down before the town of Alstetten, which was defended only by a handful of Appenzellers. But such was the negligence of the besiegers, that they suffered both the garrison and the inhabitants to escape, during the night, with their most valuable effects; and what is still more extraordinary, they were totally ignorant of their flight. Indignant that so small a force should presume to hold out against his powerful army, the duke issued orders for a general assault, declaring his resolution to put every soul to the sword. Preparations were accordingly made for storming the town, and the Austrians advanced to the walls in battle array. To their extreme surprise, a general silence prevailed. But what was their astonishment, on entering the town, to find only empty houses,

\* Walser.

which

CHAP. which in the violence of their resentment  
 XII. they instantly consigned to the flames ! Frederick now repassed the Rhine, not daring to venture any farther into a country, where he had so often suffered for his temerity\*.

1411. In the following year died the unfortunate Cuno, worn out with age and disappointment. The Appenzellers availed themselves of this event, and renewed their application to the Helvetic league. The moment was favourable to their wishes, as a misunderstanding prevailed between Austria and the Swiss. But, as the turbulent disposition of their new allies might involve the confederacy in continual wars, it was expressly stipulated, that the Appenzellers should never take up arms without the full approbation of their coestates. By another article it was enacted, that the *whole force* of Appenzel was to be at the disposal of the confederates, and to march *whenever and wherever* they should be required, *at their own expense*; while they were to be

\* Tschudi, viii.

*satisfied*

*satisfied with whatever reinforcements the united cantons might find it convenient to spare, and were also bound to supply them with provisions and other necessities, during the whole time that they might be employed in their service\*.*

\* May, II. i.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Internal Affairs of Switzerland—Acquisitions made by the different Cantons—The Swiss carry their Arms beyond the St. Gothard—Disputes with the Duke of Milan—Death of Rupert—Sigismund Emperor—Corruptions of the Papal Government—Origin of the Hierarchy—Council of Pisa.*

CHAP.  
XIII.

THE desire of connecting our subject under one general point of view has induced us to occupy ourselves with the affairs of Appenzel, to the total neglect of the rest of Switzerland. This naturally obliges us to return back for a few years, that we may take a view of the conduct and policy of the confederates during the memorable contest between the Appenzellers and the house of Austria.

None

None of the members of the federative government were so opportunely situated as Zurich, to profit by the general confusion; and it is but justice to acknowledge, that the senate availed itself with consummate prudence of their fortunate position. The event, likewise, answered their fondest expectations; since they reaped essential benefit from the distresses of Austria, as we have already observed, without infringing the subsisting truce.

A dispute having arisen about the castle of Rhemfeldt, which had been mortgaged to the republic, the bishop of Constance resolved to have recourse to measures more efficacious than those of negotiation. A detachment of his troops accordingly took possession of the fortress, which was but slightly guarded. The ill-advised prelate, however, soon found cause to repent his rashness; for the Zurichers, entering his territory constrained him to purchase peace, on conditions by no means agreeable to episcopal pride. Various other differences of a similar nature were terminated in a manner equally satisfactory to the republic,

and

CHAP.  
XIII.



CHAP. and contributed essentially to extend her  
XIII. dominion on the side of Kyburg and the  
Thurgau\*.

While the Zurickers were thus engaged in the pursuits of interest and ambition, the Austrians availing themselves of the truce which still subsisted between them and the Appenzellers, made an attempt to surprise the town of Bâle. A violent dispute had for some time subsisted between the inhabitants of that city and the duchess (the widow of Leopold duke of Austria,) with regard to the boundaries of their respective territories. Frederic, to whom the administration of his deceased brother's dominions was entrusted during his nephew's minority, resolved to take an active part in the contest, and accordingly directed the count of Sultz to unite his forces with those of the duchess: upon which Zurich, Berne, Soleure, and Strasburg sent reinforcements to the defence of Bâle†. While both sides were preparing for hostilities, an attempt was made by the duke of Bavaria

\* Stumpf, vi. † Stumpf, ib.

to stop the effusion of blood; but, neither CHAP. party was yet sufficiently cool, to listen to <sup>XIII.</sup> the suggestions of reason.

Undismayed, however, by his ill-success, he persevered in his benevolent purpose, till he at length persuaded the belligerent powers to consent to a truce for the space of one year, which was shortly followed by a peace\*.

This mediation proved highly creditable to its author, as both parties were satisfied with the result, and appeared anxious to obviate every future cause of complaint: so that in a few months after the treaty was signed, the duchess cemented the union by many additional clauses, all of which tended to combine the two states by the strictest bonds of amity; and in a contest with some of the neighbouring barons, she reaped material advantage from the aid of her new allies.

\* By this treaty the castles of Stein near Rheinfeld, of Rheineck, and Altenstein, were ceded to Bâle. The former, however, was subsequently restored for a sum of money.

CHAP. **XIII.** Notwithstanding the heavy losses, which they had sustained from the late conflagration, the Berners were never deficient in resources, when the aggrandisement of the republic was at stake. Thus by purchase they acquired Simmenegg in the vale of Siben, Manneberg, Reutlingen, Signau, Frutigen, Wangen, Trachselwald and Hutweil.\* Besides these, they bought, in conjunction with Soleure, the castles of Beckburg, Fridau, Bipp, Erlisburg, and Wietlisbach†.

Meanwhile, a dispute took place between Conrad‡ count of Friburg, and the town of

\* In the course of a short campaign, they reduced the castles of Neuenstein, Blauenstein, and Furstentein, and having taken the despotic owners prisoners, they ordered them instantly to be beheaded on scaffolds erected before the gates of their own fortresses.

† In the sequel a partition took place; by which Bipp, Erlisburg, Fridau, and Wietlisbach became the exclusive property of the Berners; while Beckburg alone remained to Soleure.

‡ Conrad was the son of Verena, daughter of Lewis count of Neuchatel, who in conjunction with her sister (the countess of Nidau) had inherited that country upon the death of her father, who died without male issue.

Neuchâtel. The count, a man of weak CHAP. understanding, and governed by persons XIII. little wiser than himself, was imprudent enough to attempt the resumption of several grants which had been derived from the bounty of his predecessors. It was pretended by his friends, that a power of redemption had been reserved, at the time when these immunities were conferred. But whether they were right in their assertions or not, the attempt was equally impolitic; since it was repugnant to the wishes of the people, which it is the paramount duty of every government to respect. It should be ever present to the recollection of those, who are entrusted with the conduct of public affairs, that all is not practicable, which may be rigidly just in point of law.

The wealthy canons no sooner became acquainted with the plan in agitation, than they grew alarmed for their temporalities. By their secret instigation a spirit of disaffection was disseminated among the burghers, who were told that this was only a prelude to acts of still greater injustice. A general remonstrance

CHAP. remonstrance was accordingly framed; and  
 XIII. presented to the count. But as he still remained inflexible, application was made to the senate of Berne, who immediately took the petitioners under their protection. Finding that nothing could be obtained by severity, Conrad availed himself of the example of his rebellious subjects, and demanding to be received as an *an* *co* *burgher*, submitted the whole affair to the award of the republic.

The interested ambition of the Berners was delighted at an event, which portended so advantageous an issue. It afforded a fair opportunity for the senators to display their dexterity in negotiation; and with such ingenuity did they conduct themselves, that they thenceforth obtained a paramount jurisdiction in all disputes between the count and his vassals; while as a mark of superiority they required an annual tribute, trifling indeed in point of value, but still of infinite importance, since it indisputably established the claim of feudal supremacy.

The decision of the senate not proving

so

so favourable to the pretensions of the clergy, as they had vainly flattered themselves it would, they resorted to an artifice of another kind, and produced an instrument with the pretended signature of the late count, by which they were entirely enfranchised from all feudal jurisdiction. The deed however appearing on farther investigation to have been suppositious, the authors of the forgery, notwithstanding their sacred function, suffered death on a scaffold.\*

The protection afforded by the Helvetic states to all who implored their assistance, however defensible it might be on abstract principles, was not easily reconciled with the prevailing notions of justice; since it is impossible to deny, that it continually operated as a powerful incentive to rebellion. The following anecdote will sufficiently illustrate the truth of this remark. Hugh of Mumpelgard, lord of Oltingen, had long treated his vassals with severity. Accustomed however to implicit submis-

\* Stettler, iii.

CHAP. sion, and taught from their cradles to  
XIII. consider princes as the immediate delegates  
of heaven, they would never probably have  
thought of resisting the vicegerent of the  
Almighty, had they not been encouraged  
by the secret emissaries of Berne, whose  
business it was to scatter the seeds of in-  
subordination in every soil which appear-  
ed proper for their reception. Rendered  
daring by the promise of support, the  
peasants flew to arms, and having taken  
the castle by storm, barbarously murdered  
its owner, and razed its walls to the ground.  
The count of Savoy, a near relation of the  
deceased, no sooner learned his melancholy  
fate, than he sent a solemn embassy to  
Berne to complain of this treacherous con-  
duct, and publicly to accuse the senate  
of being the secret authors of his kins-  
man's death. The proofs were too flagrant  
to admit of palliation; so that the govern-  
ment had nothing left but positively to  
deny the charge and to prepare for war,  
which now seemed inevitable. Hostilities  
were, however, prevented by the timely  
interference of the count of Neuchatel,  
and

and an amicable arrangement took place; CHAP. XIII.  
 by which the town of Oltingen was ceded to the republic, upon the payment of a stipulated sum to the widowed countess. Thus is money the universal agent in all political transactions! The ties of consanguinity, the laws of honour, the principles of justice, are equally sacrificed at the insatiate shrine of interest! \*

Hitherto we have contemplated the Swiss under circumstances the most flattering to their national character. We have beheld them waging an unequal, though successful, war against the house of Austria in defence of their independence, and exhibiting to the world a memorable example of the inefficacy of a military force, when a long series of injuries has kindled the resentment of mankind, and awakened them to a sense of their inherent rights. But success is the parent of ambition; and every prosperous enterprise operates as an incentive to new undertakings. The boundaries which nature

\* Stettler, ib.



CHAP. seemed to have assigned to Helvetic power,  
XIII. appeared too confined for the aspiring  
genius of a people, induced by repeated  
triumphs to consider fortune as irrevocably  
chained to the republican car.

On the southern side of the St. Gothard  
lies the Levantine valley, a picturesque  
country, watered by the abundant streams  
of the Ticino, which derives its source  
from the snows collected upon the sum-  
mits of the parent-mountain. Immediately  
after their own emancipation, the Urners  
attempted to persuade the peaceable in-  
habitants of that romantic district, to burst  
the shackles of tyranny, and to partake  
with them in the blessings of freedom.  
The proposal was too tempting to be re-  
jected; but before they returned a deci-  
sive answer, they requested time to consult  
the canons of Milan, to whom the greater  
part of the country was subject. Ac-  
customed to govern with a lenient hand,  
and happy to seize every occasion which  
could contribute to the happiness of others,  
those benevolent priests readily consented  
to the projected alliance. But the adja-  
cent

cent nobles, many of whom pretended to equal authority with the chapter of Milan, beheld the transaction in a different light. While separated from the rebellious Swiss by the Alps, they flattered themselves to continue their ancient exactions without opposition ; but the near approach of a people, whose cry was freedom, struck them with dismay. With common accord therefore they embraced the resolution of carrying on a desultory war against the inhabitants of the Levantine vale, and of harassing them by continual incursions, till they consented to break off all connection with their new allies. These petty hostilities consisted chiefly in attempts to carry away the cattle from the lower Alps, and were productive of frequent skirmishes, which seldom terminated without some effusion of blood.\*

Among the most violent opponents of republican principles was the lord of Belinzona ; who lived in close union with the duke of Milan, and was powerfully abetted

\* Stumpf, ix,

by

CHAP. by him in every enterprise against the  
XIII. cause of freedom and mankind.

1410. A party of soldiers, in the pay of one of the petty tyrants who infested the southern passes of the Alps, having seized a drove of cattle belonging to a farmer of Uri, the government sent immediately to demand satisfaction. But receiving an evasive answer, they addressed themselves to the duke of Milan and the count of Savoy, as joint-sovereigns of the vale of Ossola. By the first they were treated with that equivocal courtesy, which is the invariable characteristic of duplicity, and which seems almost indigenous to the Italian soil. By the latter they were received with coldness, and dismissed without redress. But the confederates were not of a temper to content themselves with the insidious smiles of the one, or with the contemptuous indifference of the other. They assembled an army, and marched directly to Domo d'Ossola, the most considerable place in the whole district, which surrendered upon the first summons. The confederates having occupied themselves for

for a few days in municipal arrangements, and appointed a governor, returned to their native mountains. No sooner were they retired, than the duke of Milan again took possession of it; but the ensuing spring once more opened its gates to the Helvetic troops. In this kind of desultory warfare, hostilities were carried on for three years, till the assembling of a general council at Constance gave a different bent to the public mind, and obliged the Swiss, for some time at least, to relinquish all plans of conquest on the side of Italy.\*

Such was the situation of affairs, when the death of Rupert threatened Germany with fresh convulsions, and presented a new scene of action to the restless genius of Frederic. Laying aside for the present every ideas of interrupting the internal repose of Helvetia, he attempted by repeated demonstrations of kindness to captivate the friendship of that unquiet people; and so far succeeded, that the truce was renewed for the space of fifty years.

\* Tschudi, viii.

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## XIII

Two competitors declared their intention of disputing the imperial crown; beside the wretched Wenceslaus, who still existed an object of contempt or of pity to all who approached him. The voice of the electors being divided, two emperors were raised to the vacant throne; Jodocus or Job, marquis of Moravia, and Sigismund, the brother of Wenceslaus. But the former dying within three months after his election, his rival remained undisputed possessor of the imperial dignity.\*

This prince was by nature endowed with every external accomplishment calculated to command respect; and being a critical observer of all those punctilious forms, which impose upon vulgar minds, he obtained a degree of consideration from his contemporaries, to which by his moderate talents he was in no degree entitled. His character, naturally serious, had led him to the study of religious subjects; and being struck with the disorders which prevailed in the church, he figured to him-

\* Schmidt, VII. xii.

self a reign of glory and a crown of immortality, could he succeed in restoring unity to the christian world! With this intent he set out for Italy, in hopes of persuading John XXIII. who then filled the papal chair, to convoke a general council. After employing every subterfuge, which the crooked politics of Rome could suggest, the pontiff was compelled to fix on Constance as the most convenient place for the convocation of the synod. Delighted with the success of his negotiation, the emperor returned to Germany over the St. Bernard, and proceeded through Berne to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he received the imperial crown from the hands of the archbishop of Cologne\*.

CHAP. XIII

1413.

The council of Constance forms a memorable epoch in modern history; and as its influence not only extended over the events and characters of those times, but operated powerfully upon the opinions and conduct of the succeeding age, we think it right to enter more minutely, perhaps, than

1414.

\* Muller, III. i.

the

CHAP. the subject would otherwise require) into  
 XIII. the preceding history of the church, and  
 to trace the gradual progress of the  
 HIERARCHY from its first institution to  
 this momentous period, when it shone  
 forth in all the ostentation of royal page-  
 anty.

In the early ages of the Christian era, truth was taught in its native simplicity by men, who felt the full importance of the doctrines which they preached, and benevolently laboured to impart its salutary light to the blind and ignorant of every nation. No splendid ceremonies, no stately edifices, no proud distinctions were then employed to recommend a religion which spoke directly to the heart, and raised our views and wishes from this transient scene to a better and imperishable world. The precepts delivered were upon a level with the meanest apprehension. Pure and perfect as the essence of the divinity they reduced to a practical system the sublimest theory of morality.

CHARITY

CHARITY—or, to speak in the more pompous language of modern philosophy, CHAP. XIII.  
 UNIVERSAL PHILANTHROPY, was the fundamental principle of the gospel. The young regarded it as an indispensable duty to assist the aged, the indigent, and the infirm; and they, who dedicated their lives exclusively to such services, were distinguished by the appellation of *helpers* or *assistants*. These progressively increased, and divided themselves into separate communities, of which the *head* or *overseer* assumed the title of *bishop*. The functions, exercised by this latter body of men, gave them considerable influence in their respective societies, which gradually extended itself over a wider surface; while love and charity formed a bond of union between the preachers, and the hearers, of the gospel.\*

Such was the origin of the *hierarchy*: an office not only mild and inoffensive, but productive of the most salutary consequence to mankind, so long as it was

\* Masheim, I. 93, &c.

confined



CHAP. confined within its original limits. But

XIII. such is the weakness of human nature, that there are few characters sufficiently virtuous to withstand an uninterrupted course of prosperity. Thus we find within the space of a few centuries bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs (the title is immaterial) throwing aside every vestige of that moderation and humility, which assimilated them to their divine Master, and substituting in their place the discordant passions of ambition, avarice and pride. Assuming to themselves prerogatives, which had no foundation in holy writ, they aspired to reign over the Christian world with the same despotic authority, with which the descendants of Aaron had formerly governed the Jews : and instead of recurring to the primitive church for precedents, they were ever forward to allege the example of that presumptuous people, in defence of their own usurpations.\* No longer confining themselves

\* Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History gives a melancholy picture of ecclesiastical ambition in almost every page.

to spiritual affairs, they entered with eagerness into the intrigues of courts, and were occupied in contests for worldly grandeurs; till at length uniting the altar to the throne, they formed that monstrous compact, the secret object of which was to overthrow the liberties of mankind, and then to divide the spoil.

Conscious, however, that this system of tyranny was diametrically repugnant to the humane tenets of that religion, upon whose perverted principles they aimed to establish it, they carefully concealed the VOLUME OF TRUTH from the eyes of the uninitiated; and commanded men to obey its precepts, not according to their original meaning, but under the interpretations which interest or ambition found it convenient to give. What a field was here for the display of cunning!

Such also were the ideas of sanctity, which the fears and prejudices of a misguided people attached to the episcopal character, that the ferocious conquerors of southern Europe were awed into respect by a mitred priest, and listened to the ad-

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monitions

CHAP.  
XIII

monitions of the clergy, as to the sacred dictates of oracular truth\*. The Pope, or bishop of Rome, took advantage of this favourable impression, and availing himself of the ignorance and superstition of the unenlightened victor, established his throne upon the ruins of Gothic paganism†. As the worship of that idolatrous church was accompanied with ceremonies far more imposing than the barbarous rites of Woden or Thor, he experienced little difficulty in persuading the heroes of Sarmatia or Scandinavia to embrace a religion, the pagantries of which were emi-

\* The barbarous nations, who embraced christianity, regarded the Roman pontiff as the successor of their arch-Druid, or high priest, and of course transferred to him a power almost absolute. Mosheim, II. 227.

† In order to give stability to this new system, the bishops of Rome employed the most ingenious men of the age to forge creeds, canons, and acts of council, that they might found their usurpations upon ancient precedents. Among these fictions, none is more worthy of notice, than the famous *decretal epistles*, attributed by the church of Rome to the primitive pontiffs, but which were, in fact, the production of an obscure writer in the ninth century. Id. II. 226.

2

2

mently

mentally calculated to amuse the unenlight- CHAP.  
ened, and to impress the credulous With <sup>XIII</sup>  
rapid flight the Roman pontiff now soared  
to universal dominion. His authority was  
revered, and his infallibility established, in  
most of those kingdoms, which sprang out  
of the chaos of anarchy and conquest. How-  
ever different their laws, their customs,  
and their modes of worship, they seem all  
to have agreed in acknowledging one su-  
preme head in religious concerns, whose  
person was inviolable, and whose autho-  
rity was uncontroled.

Thus, till the commencement of the  
fourteenth century, the hierarchy flour-  
ished with increasing splendour; while  
Italy and Rome were rendered inde-  
pendent of the eastern empire by the  
achievements of the Normans and the  
Franks. Both these nations made use of  
the popes as instruments of their own ag-  
grandisement; while those artful politi-  
cians, holding the balance between them,  
managed their own interests with such  
consummate skill, that whichever party  
S 2 triumphed,

CHAP. triumphed, the church never failed to par-  
 XIII. ticipate in the success.

Boniface VIII. supported his spiritual and temporal authority with the dignity of a man, fully sensible of the extensive power, with which he was invested. At that period, no sovereign in Europe possessed either the discernment to discover, or the courage to oppose, the arrogant claims of the holy see. The dread of ecclesiastical censures, and all their fatal consequences, operated with incalculable force on the minds of an unenlightened people. No pretensions, however extravagant, experienced the slightest contradiction. So that the influence and authority of the sovereign pontiff continued to increase with a rapidity beyond all former example. Yet under Boniface himself, the edifice began already to totter, and from his time had been gradually on the decay\*. But if we examine minutely into the causes of this revolution, we shall find, that the decline

\* Mosheim, V. III, p. 313.

of papal power may be easily accounted for by the pride and immorality of those to whom it was entrusted. It is natural for the unfortunate in every station, and more particularly for those who are taught to believe themselves wiser and more virtuous than the rest of mankind, to attribute their ruin to any other cause, rather than to their own misconduct. The current of popular opinion, and the temper of the times, are usually brought forward to excuse the vices or follies of those, who have fallen from the heights of human grandeur. But they seldom operate with the effect which is supposed. A prudent government is scarcely ever opposed. Had the full meridian of papal greatness been distinguished by the same wisdom which marked its dawn, the successor of St. Peter might possibly, at this moment, have been dictating laws from the Vatican to the whole christian world.

Since the era of the crusades the situation of the higher classes of nobility had materially changed. The expenses incidental to those fatal expeditions, the per-

CHAP. petual wars into which the barons were  
 XIII. hurried by the ferocious spirit of the age, combining with the costly ostentation of feudal pride, had by impairing their fortunes diminished their consequence: while on the other hand the regal powers, particularly in France, had risen upon the ruins of the aristocracy.


Notwithstanding all the misery, however, which they occasioned, and the torrents of blood which they had caused to flow, there can remain little doubt that these expeditions were eventually productive of important benefits to mankind, by opening a wider field for speculation and inquiry; and by eradicating many of those inveterate prejudices, which are natural to man in an insulated state. The different sovereigns of Europe began now to view with a jealous eye, the prodigious sums of money, which were drained from every order of their subjects, to replenish the coffers of the church. But powerfully as such observations operated, the revival of letters proved still more fatal to that corrupt and corrupting power, whose throne

was

was erected upon ignorance, and supported CHAP.  
XIII.  
by imposture. The seeds of science, which Frederic II. transplanted from the schools of Greece to enlighten and refine his unpolished countrymen, produced fruits of very different qualities. In the universities, to total ignorance succeeded that unintelligible jargon, which under the pompous title of metaphysics was far more calculated to perplex than to enlighten the intellectual faculties. Yet still it served to exercise the powers of reflection, and may in that respect at least be considered as a step toward improvement. Among the other classes of society, a spirit of investigation was daily spreading. Their language was purified by an acquaintance with the classic writings of antiquity, and new ideas of freedom rushed into the mind of the enraptured student, as he hung over the pages of Demosthenes or of Cicero.

In proportion as the human mind was fortified by study, it assumed a bolder tone, portraying the vices and abuses of the court of Rome in all their native deformity. Among the writers of this de-  
S 4
scription,



CHAP. XIII.  scription, Petrarch was eminently distinguished by the keenness of his satire, and contributed essentially to direct the attention of his contemporaries to the dissolute conduct of men, who had assumed to themselves the proud distinction of the vicegerents of heaven upon earth.

Philip *le Bel*, king of France, who had perhaps a still better claim to the title of *bold*, (as none of his predecessors ever made so free with the property of other men) was engaged in an acrimonious dispute with Boniface VIII\*, in consequence of the protection which he afforded to the Colonna family, when expelled from Rome by the papal faction. In the violence of his wrath, the indignant pontiff despatched

\* Some idea of the vehement character of this haughty pontiff may be collected from the following anecdote. He was distributing the ashes, according to the custom of the church of Rome, to a congregation of prelates, on the first day of Lent. When the archbishop of Genoa presented himself to receive them, he threw them in his face, saying, "Remember that thou art a Ghibelin," instead of the usual words, "Remember that thou art a man." Voltaire *Essai sur l'Histoire*, lxi.

a legate

a legate to Paris, to insult the king to his face. But Philip, was not of a temper tamely to put up with an affront. He accordingly committed the nuncio to close confinement, and gave orders to Revel, his minister at Rome, to demand satisfaction of the pope for the indignity. Incensed at this unexpected resistance, Boniface ventured to threaten France with an interdict, arrogantly boasting of his paramount jurisdiction over all the princes of Christendom. To this Revel calmly replied: "Holy father, you seem to forget that your weapons exist only *in idea*, whereas those of the king, my master, are *made of tempered steel*." Philip, however, had recourse to other measures more efficacious than ridicule; and having employed some of the Colonna party to arrest the pope at Anagni, resentment and pride exasperated his implacable temper to such a degree, that he is said to have expired in a paroxysm of rage\*.

Benedict XI., who succeeded, reigned

\* Mosheim, III. 314.

only

CHAP. only a few months, when Philip, by his  
 XIII. intrigues and bribes, prevailed upon the  
 cardinals to raise Bernard de Got (a Gascon by birth) to the apostolic throne, who assumed the name of Clement V.\* Devoted to his patron's will, he not only annulled the decrees and interdicts of the impetuous Boniface, but consented to the destruction of the order of the Templars, and even removed the holy see to Avignon, to the great detriment and humiliation of the Roman people. During the space of seventy years, the capital of the christian world was deserted by the representative of St. Peter, after having been the residence of nearly two hundred popes †.

Meanwhile

† Id. ib. 216.

\* Had the successors of Philip possessed equal abilities with himself, the holy father would probably have sunk from his plenitude of power, as sovereign-director of the universal church, to the same state of dependence on the Gallic crown, to which he has been since reduced by the victorious arms of Bonaparte. But Philip died in the meridian of life; and with his three sons, who rapidly followed each other to the grave, the male line was extinguished. The pretensions of Edward III. of England to this

Meanwhile Italy was governed by a series of petty princes, who rejected the authority both of the pope and of the emperor. The brilliant talents of cardinal Egidius restored an appearance of order and tranquillity, to which that devoted country had been long a stranger. This fortunate change was the prelude to still greater felicity. In 1377, Gregory XI.\* returned to Rome, amid the prayers and blessings of a populace, almost frantic with joy. This prelate, though blessed with the humble virtues of a monk, was utterly a stranger to the arts of government. Scarcely had he taken possession of the splendid apartments of the Vatican, than he began to repent of his folly, in having abandoned the tranquil comforts of Avignon for the pompous turbulence of Rome†. Upon his death, an armed mul-

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tinous inheritance, involved both states in destructive wars, for a long succession of years.

\* 14. j6.

† Mosheim pretends that he was actually preparing to return to Avignon, when he was struck by the hand of death.

titude

CHAP. titude assembled before the Vatican, and  
 XIII. forced the cardinals, as they entered the  
 conclave, to promise that they would vote  
 for an Italian. Urban X. was accordingly  
 elected, and a disastrous schism ensued.

Robert, count of Geneva, was no sooner  
 opposed to Urban, by the name of Cle-  
 ment VII. (or more properly V. according  
 to the regular succession of legitimate  
 popes) than he established his residence  
 at Avignon. This memorable contest for  
 power, by adding religious fervour to civil  
 discord, completed the confusion of the  
 christian world. From the jarring interests  
 of the rival pontiffs it frequently happened,  
 that more than one ecclesiastical was nomi-  
 nated to a benefice; upon which force was  
 usually employed to decide the question  
 of divine right, and blood was frequently  
 shed in the dispute. To such a degree  
 did this spirit of dissention spread, that the  
 pious were often tormented on the bed of  
 death with scruples of conscience respect-  
 ing the validity of the powers, with which  
 their confessor was invested. The pro-  
 fligate, on the other hand, had no longer  
 any

any motives to restrain their inordinate passions; since, in the struggle for temporary emoluments, they were sure of receiving easy absolution\*. Thus crimes of the blackest die were perpetrated by persons, who filled the most eminent stations. The duke of Milan murdered his own uncle: Giovanni, his son, fell a victim to the fury of the populace; and Joan, queen of Naples, after having imbrued her hands in the blood of her husband, was strangled by a near relation.

Anarchy and despotism, by turns triumphant in the different countries of Europe, present a picture of unparalleled confusion. Italy was a prey to the licentious fury of mercenary banditti, attracted by the love of plunder from France, England, and Germany. Wenceslaus was deposed for a series of crimes and follies, worthy of the maddest of the Cæsars; and Germany, divided between two rival candidates, was menaced with all the horrors of a civil war. Charles VI. of France, was insane. Richard II. of England, became the victim of domestic dissension. Mosheim.

dence,

CHAP. mestic faction. Sweden lost her indepen-  
 XII. dence, while France was reduced to the  
 very brink of ruin by the fatal animosities,  
 which so long subsisted between the dukes  
 of Orleans and Burgundy. The wars be-  
 tween the houses of York and Lancaster,  
 the inveterate contest that deluged Sweden  
 and Denmark in blood, the dissensions of  
 the German princes, the final overthrow of  
 the Greek empire, the daring projects of  
 the Ottoman Bajazet which spread terror  
 over the christian world, and finally the  
 great and brilliant victories of Timar, whose  
 triumphs extended from the confines of  
 China to the shores of the Adriatic—all  
 these surprising events, which happened  
 during the course of a single century, paved  
 the way for those important changes, both  
 civil and religious, which were soon to fol-  
 low, and opened to the genius of man a more  
 extensive field for speculation and for action.

During this unhappy period, there ap-  
 peared in Europe several illustrious cha-  
 racters, not less eminent for their talents  
 and virtues, than for their boldness in the  
 pursuit of truth. Henry of Hesse, Peter

of Ailly, the chancellor Gerson, and Nicolas de Clemanges, all men of deep erudition and persevering industry, exerted themselves with unremitting zeal, in exposing the abuses of the papal government. While, as if nothing less than a general concussion could overturn a fabric, which had been strengthened by the accumulated labours of a thousand years, the whole christian world proclaimed in a voice of thunder the necessity of a REFORMATION.

Convinced that it was impossible long to combat the wishes of mankind, the cardinals at length consented to convene a general council at Pisa, before which Innocent VII. and Benedict XIII. were summoned to appear. Little could it be expected that men of turbulent dispositions, and accustomed to the charms of power, should willingly consent to resign it. They in consequence determined to procrastinate the hour of degradation, by protesting against the legality of the assembly, as deficient in many of the necessary formalities. The cardinals, however, without farther delay, proceeded to business; and having declared

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CHAP. declared them both guilty of contumacy,  
 XIII. ventured to depose them, and to choose Alexander V. in their place. Alexander was a person of mean extraction, and is said even to have been supported by charity in his youth. He owed his elevation entirely to the celebrated cardinal Cossa, a man possessed of bold and splendid talents, and like himself risen from an humble station. In the early part of his life indeed, he is reported to have exercised the profession of *pirate*, which was certainly more analogous to his natural character, than that of a christian prelate.

Alexander had taken an oath, with the other members of the sacred college, not to separate before a reform was effected. But no sooner had he obtained the envied dignity, than he found a thousand pretexts to avoid fulfilling his engagement. Perceiving, however, that the prelates were by no means satisfied with his evasive conduct, he thought it prudent to dismiss them, and for this purpose prorogued the synod to 1412. Thus the only benefit, which Europe derived from this council, which

which has been called in derision the *con-* CHAP  
*venticle of demons*, was the creation of a *XIII*  
 third pope.

The schism was thus rendered wider than ever. On the death of Alexander, his former patron cardinal Cossa was raised to the papal chair, under the title of John XXIII. Meanwhile Ladislaus king of Naples, availing himself of the weakness of the pontifical government,\* made himself master of Rome, Ancona, and the far greater part of the ecclesiastical state. The force, which he employed in this expedition, was so considerable, that it would have been in vain for the pope to oppose it. Ladislaus was eminently gifted with all those brilliant qualities, which constitute the hero; and would, in all probability, have reduced Italy once more under the dominion of a single master, had he not been arrested by the hand of death in the midst of his career of conquest. Terrified at the approach of the victor, John fled to Bologna, excommunicated by the two rival pontiffs, unacknowledged by the larger

\* Muller.

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portion

CHAP. portion of Europe, and unassisted by  
 XIII. France, in whose support his chief confidence was placed. In this state of desperation, he applied to Sigismund for protection, who immediately flew to his succour with an alacrity, more honourable to his zeal than to his discretion.

Though dignified with the pompous title of emperor, Sigismund possessed little more than the shadow of a mighty name. Yet he considered it as a duty imposed by his exalted station, to exercise all the influence which still remained to the imperial crown, in restoring peace and unity to the church. The undertaking was congenial to his natural character, and in some measure expected from him by the christian world. As protector of the holy see, he laid claim to supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs. For though the authority of the emperors was entirely confined to Germany, and even there was greatly circumscribed, they had uniformly assumed the title of *Kings of the Romans*, since the days of Otho the Great.\*

\* Muller, Ml. i.

Heinrich

T

Sigismund

Sigismund was equally in want both of men, and of money. Yet no consideration could induce him to delay his journey into Italy, on the success of which he seems to have relied\* for his future character in the world. In his progress through Helvetia, he endeavoured to prevail upon the Swiss to furnish him with reinforcements; that he might appear with a retinue more suitable to his dignity, and have nothing to apprehend from the duke of Milan, with whom he was at that time engaged in a dispute. No difficulty was at first made to the demand, but a diet being assembled at Lucerne, to debate the question in a more regular form, a thousand obstacles were started. The folly of sacrificing their lives in a contest, where the prosperity of the nation was so little concerned, could not fail to strike a people, who were perfect adepts in the science of political arithmetic. But while these considerations were found to operate with proper weight upon the majority of the assembly, others supported

CHAP.  
XII.

\* Muller, III. i. a lib. of  
T 2 a dif.

CHAPTER XIII. a different opinion; and thought that the honour of assisting in so laudable an undertaking might justify some little deviation from the rigid rules of prudence. It was accordingly resolved to adopt a middle course, and though they refused to engage in a national war, individuals were left at perfect liberty to follow the dictates of their own inclinations. This important point being settled, Sigismund continued his route to Bellinzona, where he was joined by sixteen hundred mercenaries; and shortly afterward by Guiscard, baron of Raron, with one hundred horse and six hundred foot. But this increase of numbers served only to render the emperor more sensible of his penury. For he was a perfect stranger to those popular talents, which amidst the most intolerable hardships, captive affection, and engagement to undergo fatigue and privations without a murmur. Allured by the prospect of plunder, they followed the imperial standard to Trezzo, when having discovered that Sigismund had entered into a negotiation with the duke of Milan, and disgusted at the

the haughty carriage of the German nobility, they unanimously determined to return immediately to their native vallies.

We have already been made acquainted with the result of this expedition, as well as with the emperor's visit to Berne. The magnificence, with which he was received, is related with many interesting details by Muller\*, from whom we shall borrow the following particulars. At a small distance from the town, he was met by a troop of five hundred youths, of the most engaging figures; none of whom exceeded the age of sixteen. They were decorated with wreaths of flowers, among which the imperial eagle was artfully introduced. At the head of this lovely procession, a boy of uncommon beauty bore the standard of the holy empire. A train of priests followed, carrying crucifixes and tapers, and distributing relics and indulgences with great profusion to all around. No sooner were they arrived at the gates of Berne, than the *wooyer* presented Sigismund with the keys, which

Muller, H.

T 3

he

CHAP. he immediately returned, with these words;

XIII.

“Take them, and keep them carefully.

“They can never be committed to better hands.” While he rode through the

streets, a golden canopy was held over his head by the four *bannerets*. On both sides

the arcades were lined by the senators, and other great-officers of the state; while the

windows and balconies were crowded with spectators of every rank and sex. At the

convent of the Dominicans which was allotted for his residence, his chamber was

hung with silk, and it's floor was covered with cloth of gold. Meanwhile, wine and

provisions were abundantly distributed to his retinue; and in order that no sense

might remain ungratified, the most beautiful women were collected from the neigh-

bouring towns, who like the houris in a Mahomedan paradise, welcomed the stran-

gers with open arms. Sigismund was so enchanted with his reception, that he con-

tinued at Berne for three days, during which time the whole city presented a scene of

unbounded and licentious festivity. The people were transported to excess with their

royal

royal guest, who possessed an uncommon share of dignity and grace; qualities peculiarly calculated to please the populace, and which frequently pass with them for real greatness.

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XIII.



1413. Council of Constance. The Pope's flight. The Emperor's arrival. The Council's opening. The Emperor's speech. The Pope's return. The Council's proceedings. The Emperor's departure. The Council's dissolution. The Pope's death. The Council's legacy.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*Council of Constance—Abdication and Flight of the Pope—Frederic quits Constance—Is put under the Ban of the Empire—War against Austria—Frederic submits—John deposed—Martin elected—The Council dissolved—John Huss and Jerome of Prague.*

CHAP.  
XIV.  
1413.


**N**OTWITHSTANDING the repeated assurances, which the pope had given of his readiness to attend the council, he was still extremely unwilling to cross the Alps. But the confidence, which he reposed in the promises of Austria, at length got the better of his apprehensions. At Trept he was met by Frederic, who attended him to Constance, where they arrived in great pomp on the 28th of August.

Constance was, at that time, the residence of many of the most distinguished personages

personages in Christendom, both for rank and learning; Emperors, kings, princes, republics, and universities, were present either personally, or by their representatives, vying with each other in the magnificence of their dress, the number of their retinue, the splendour of their arms, or the captivation of their eloquence: While artists, mechanics, and courtesans, flocked thither from every country in Europe, in search of fortune or of fame; all of whom, but particularly the latter, found abundant employment in an age, when temperance and chastity were not the most conspicuous of the clerical virtues.

Europe meanwhile anxiously awaited the result of deliberations, on the prudence of which the future welfare of christianity was supposed entirely to depend. The wise and good offered up their fervent prayers to heaven for the regeneration of that system to which they were attached by the strongest of motives: while the intriguing and the vicious, were already occupied in forming schemes to counteract every plan of reform; should an ecclesiastical synod,

in

CHAP. in contradiction to all former precedents,  
 XIV.  prove desirous of amending the discipline and correcting the abuses of the church.

The first business, which occupied the assembly, was to regulate the mode of voting. Nor was this a question of trifling importance; since its determination might decide whether the labours of the pious would be productive of benefit or not.— After a long and violent discussion, it was finally settled that the votes should be calculated by nations, and not by numbers. Of these there were five; France, England, Italy, Germany, and Spain\*. The papal party strenuously opposed this regulation; as the Italian prelates being more numerous than those of all the other nations taken collectively, John hoped by influence with them to direct the proceedings of the council, as best suited his interested views†.

\* We have included the Spaniards, though they did not attend at the beginning of the council, but joined it some time afterward.

† Muller, *ib.*

This

This was, indeed, a fatal blow to all his expectations, and a messenger arriving at the same time to announce the death of Ladislaus, he began already to repent his folly, in having entrusted the reputation of his future days to a foreign synod, whose suffrages he was too poor to purchase, and too weak to controul. Perceiving that his abdication was inevitable, he was already occupied in devising means for his flight; as he was resolved to encounter every danger, rather than relinquish the honours of the triple crown.

Frederic likewise was sensibly mortified at the transcendent splendor of Sigismund, who appeared surrounded and served by the greatest princes of the empire. He now cursed the hour, when he had imprudently suffered his diminished star to come in contact with a luminary of such superior magnitude. Neither was the emperor displeased at an opportunity of humbling a prince, who alone, among the German potentates, was in a situation to dispute his superiority. Having received due homage from all the princes of inferior rank, he was particularly  
anxious

CHAP. anxious to obtain this mark of submission  
 XIV. from the duke of Austria.

Frederic, being summoned to comply, excused himself under pretence that it was a privilege belonging to his house to receive the investiture on horseback and in their own dominions; a condition to which the emperor refused absolutely to accede. Such was the commencement of that animosity, which shortly afterward assumed a more determined character, and was productive of consequences nearly destructive to the duke\*.

Sigismund was highly offended at his refusal, which he considered as a personal slight; yet, conscious of his own weakness, he for the present thought fit to stifle his indignation. But in order to be prepared against a rupture, he began secretly to negotiate with the Swiss, as the hereditary enemies of Austria; demanding from them a solemn promise, that they would unite with him, in the event of a war. The Swiss, too cautious to pledge themselves rashly,

\* Muller, *ib.*

represented

represented in terms of respect, that they had lately renewed the truce with Frederic for fifty years, and that obligations of such a nature were ever too sacred to be trifled with.\* Frederic was speedily informed by his emissaries of the correspondence, which was secretly carrying on, between Sigismund and the confederates: and, though he was unable to discover how far the treaty had proceeded, he had every reason to believe, that he was himself the object against which its views were directed. He therefore deemed it prudent to assume a less haughty tone, and gave positive assurances to the emperor, that all his claims should be attended to; at the same time, endeavouring by the most alluring offers, to engage Sigismund in hostilities against the Swiss.

Regarding the proposal, however, in its true light, and placing little confidence in the promises of a prince, whose actions were governed by no permanent principle, Sigismund sent private intimation to the

\* Muller, ib.

confederates

CHAP. confederates of every thing that passed,  
XIV.

hoping by this dishonourable conduct to widen the breach between them and Frederick. But the attempt was ineffectual. For though their vigilance was awakened, they still persevered in the system of neutrality, which they had so wisely adopted.

Meanwhile, the assembled prelates unanimously demanded the abdication of the pope. Persuaded that a feigned submission might tend essentially to facilitate his escape, John replied with dissembled moderation, "that he should at all times be ready to sacrifice himself for the interests of religion." In conformity to this declaration, he presented himself before the council, and went through the painful ceremony with a degree of dignity and self-command, which produced the liveliest sympathy in the minds of the spectators. Struck with the awful spectacle, Sigismund immediately laid aside his crown, and kneeling down with demonstrations of the profoundest respect, kissed the pontiff's feet. The patriarch of Antioch then arose, and

Müller, ib.

religebat

in

in an energetic speech communicated to him the thanks of the assembly, for so glorious an act of self-devotion\*.

CHAP.  
XIV.

The whole, however, of this imposing scene was no more than a well-acted farce, performed by the successor of St. Peter, in order to disguise his real intentions. Neither was it long before his perfidy became notorious; for scarcely had he received the applauses of the council, for a display of magnanimity almost beyond the reach of human virtue, than taking advantage of the confusion of a tournament celebrated by Frederic for that purpose, he fled in the dress of a postillion, and reached Shaffhausen undiscovered; where he was soon joined by the duke of Austria.

No sooner was the pope's flight made public, than the city of Constance became a scene of tumult and consternation. Apprehensive for their own safety, the Italian prelates thought only of saving themselves from the indignation of an exasperated populace, and escaped under various dis-

\* Tschudi, *ii.* † Tschudi, *May II.* liv.

guises;



CHAP. guises; while the people ran with turbulent  
 XIV. fury to the palace which had lately been inhabited by the pontiff, and would in a few moments have razed it to the ground, had they not been prevented by the timely interference of the magistrates.

In this strange dilemma the fathers were convened; who, after mature deliberation resolved, that three cardinals should be deputed to the pope, with a pressing invitation to return. John received them with the warmest expressions of courtesy, requesting them to inform the council, "that the ill state of his health required a change of air, and that this was the sole cause of his removal." In a private letter, however, to one of his confidential friends, he expressed himself in different terms, and stated that apprehensions for his personal safety had induced him to take this precipitate step: since in the hands of Sigismund he could never deem himself secure.

After the return of the cardinals it was debated, in a numerous sitting, what mea-

CHAP. XIV.  
 sures it would be fit to pursue; when the majority agreed in opinion, that “notwithstanding the secession of the pope, the present assembly was a perfect representation of the church, and ought not to separate till it’s unity was established, and a complete reform effected.” They farther declared that “persons of all descriptions were bound to obey it’s decisions in spiritual affairs; and that John by withdrawing clandestinely from Constance, had laid himself open to a suspicion of heresy\*.

Perceiving all the benefit which might be derived from the precipitate conduct of his rival, Sigismund resolved to crush at once both the pope and his protector.—Accordingly, with the concurrence of a majority of the German princes, a deputation was sent to Frederic, requiring his immediate attendance, and threatening him, in case of disobedience, with the confiscation of all his revenues. Aware how little favour could be expected from an assembly, which was blindly devoted to his ene-

\*Müller, ib.

CHAP. my, Frederic refused to comply with the  
 XIV. summons. He was accordingly declared  
 guilty of rebellion, and put under the imperial ban; while the council, in their spiritual capacity, pronounced sentence of excommunication upon him; annulling expressly all his treaties and alliances with other states, dispensing his subjects from their oath of allegiance, and offering complete absolution to all persons who should assist in the holy work of giving full execution to the interdict, by invading any part of his dominions.\*

Whether this spirited conduct was the effect of superstition, of interest, or of a regard for the public welfare, it would be now a waste of time to inquire. The result was decisive, and gave a fatal blow to the hopes of Frederic; as many of the nobility, who had been hitherto deemed his most zealous partisans, no sooner beheld him in this abandoned state, than they took up arms for his destruction.†

\* Muller, ib. May, II. i.

† The counts of Nellenburg, Montford, Lupfen, and Toggenburg were among the number. (Stumpf, Tschudi.)

The

The chief dependence of Sigismund was placed on the co-operation of the Helvetic cantons; for accustomed as he was to be ever guided by the base suggestions of interest, he was incapable of supposing, that others should act on better and more enlightened principles. To his extreme surprise however he now discovered that, even in political transactions, the voice of honour is sometimes obeyed. The excuse alleged by the Swiss in defence of their conduct, did credit to the national character. There are writers indeed who attribute this caution to less creditable motives; and pretend that the Swiss were unwilling to declare themselves, till they could ascertain the strength of Frederic's party. But if this were the case, they were wise enough to conceal the sordid plan beneath a sacred regard for existing treaties, and the dread of violating their plighted faith.

The republic of Berne alone, of all the Helvetic people, showed no disinclination to partake in the spoils of Austria.

U 2

The

CHAP. XIV. The pope, who was minutely informed by his confidential agents of all that passed, thinking it imprudent to remain any longer in the vicinity of Constance, removed first to Lauffenburg, and then to Friburg in the Brisgau; where he published a manifesto, declaring that his resignation was the effect of compulsion, and that it ought in consequence to be regarded as null.

Every thing being prepared for war, the burgrave of Nuremberg\* assumed the command of the imperial army, and advanced into the Thurgau, where he was met by deputies from many of the Austrian towns with offers of voluntary submission. Even Shaffhausen opened its gates; and as a reward for this act of disloyalty, was restored to the dignity of an imperial city. So great indeed was the prevalence of ecclesiastical influence, or

\* The burgrave subsequently purchased the march of Brandenburg, and was the first elector of his family. So that, from the earliest period, a spirit of rivalry appears to have subsisted between the houses of Brandenburg and Austria.

such

such the unpopularity of Austria, that the troops advanced without the smallest opposition.\*

CHAP  
XIV.

The Swiss had hitherto preserved the strictest neutrality; but finding themselves menaced with the indignation of the council, in case they continued to preserve the feelings of amity toward an excommunicated prince, the majority began at length to waver; and after weighing on one hand the advantages offered by the imperial party, and on the other, the inconveniencies to which they might be exposed by faithfully respecting their engagements, they finally inclined to the side of interest. Their scruples being done away, their views and efforts were wholly directed to the future aggrandisement of Helvetia.†

The Berners, whose eyes had been long fixed upon the Argau with all the eagerness of unprincipled ambition, were the first to take the field, and commenced hostilities by the siege of Zofingen. The

\* Muller, ib.

† Stumpf, Hist. Con. Constan. Tschudi, ix.

CHAP.  
XIV.

other cantons had agreed to carry on the war in common, and at the conclusion of the campaign, to divide the spoil ; but the object of Berne was widely different. That ambitious republic aimed at acting an independent part, and seemed determined to direct her operations according to the dictates of private interest, without deigning to attend to the glory or the welfare of the confederacy.

According to the repeated declarations of all parties, the object of the war was merely to reduce the duke of Austria to a proper sense of his duty, and to compel him not only to make ample satisfaction for his past imprudence, but to give security that he would in future behave as became a dutiful son towards so indulgent a mother as the church. But whatever may have been the character, which they found it convenient to assume, the deception was too gross to succeed. The slightest knowledge of human nature was sufficient to discover, that in this, as in all similar engagements, *interest* was the master-spring, which put the whole body in motion. In  
private

private life, individuals are capable of performing the noblest deeds from generous motives; but when they act in an aggregate body, their views are less pure, and the aggrandisement of the nation is usually regarded by the least corrupt of governments as a valid excuse for ingratitude, or breach of faith.

CHAP. XIV.

Precarious as was the situation, to which Frederic was reduced, the distress of his subjects was scarcely inferior to his own. Assailed on every side by a powerful coalition, they had neither the means of concerting a general plan of defence, nor of learning the intentions of their unhappy prince. Meanwhile, the siege of Zofingen was carried on with activity by the Berners, who were desirous of rendering themselves masters of that important place; before the rest of the confederates were in a situation to take the field. Their eagerness to accomplish this object, proved a favourable circumstance for the garrison; as it induced the besiegers to accede to every reasonable demand; and of this the burghers were so fully sensible, that they



CHAP. not only obtained a complete ratification  
 XIV. of all the privileges which they had enjoyed  
 under the dominion of Austria, but even  
 acquired many additional franchises.\*

The arms of Berne were every where triumphant. Arberg, Arau, Bruck, and Lanzburg opened their gates. Even Hapsburg, the hereditary seat of Austrian greatness, submitted to the victorious republic, and was for ever lost to the successors of Rodolphus.

Though the example of Berne could not fail to operate as a strong incentive to war, the Zurickers were still desirous of preserving appearances; and upon receiving a summons from the emperor to join the league, urged in the most respectful language the scruples which they still entertained, and humbly supplicated him, if he would admit of no excuse, to publish such a rescript, as might justify them in the eyes of the world for this apparent violation of public faith. At the same time, they requested that he would consult the most

\* Lauffer, Muller, ib.

eminent civilians, with respect to the legality of such a proceeding. Justly suspecting the honesty of these scruples, Sigismund, upon receiving the request, sent back the delegates with the following declaration, which was publicly read in a general diet at Schweitz: "The electors and princes of the Roman empire, ecclesiastical and secular, together with the ambassadors of the kings of England, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, and Bohemia, having taken into serious consideration the treaty which actually subsists between the Helvetic republics and Frederic duke of Austria, are unanimously of opinion that the Swiss, as members of the Germanic body, are bound to afford every possible aid to the emperor; their obligations to the empire and to the church being paramount to all other engagements. And in return for their prompt obedience, the emperor consents to grant to the Helvetic body all the territory, which they may conquer from the duke of Austria, to be held in quality of an imperial fief.\*"

CHAP.  
XIV.

\* Muller, ib.

Sigismund,

CHAP. XIV. Sigismund, at the same time, addressed a partial ordinance to the four forest-cantons, including Zug and Glaris; stating, "that as Frederic, commonly called duke of Austria, laid claim to various jurisdictions and revenues within their respective domains, they were prohibited under the severest penalties from allowing him to levy contributions, or from affording him any feudal services; since he had forfeited every right to allegiance, by his contumacious behaviour toward the Roman empire.\*" The confederates, whose scruples were now completely lulled by the soothing prospect of gain, resolved upon war, with the single exception of the canton of Uri; for no persuasion could convince that uncorrupted people, that there existed any earthly power, capable of dispensing with the violation of oaths, and thus rendering perfidy a duty.

In a few weeks, the Lucerners made themselves masters of Sursee, with the three bailiwicks of Richensee, Meyenberg,

\* Muller, ib.

and Vilmeringen. The Zurickers, on their CHAP.  
part, were no less successful. After taking XIV.  
Mellingen and Bremgarten, they united  
their troops with those of the other cantons,  
and laid siege to Baden; the conquest of  
which, though attended with considerable  
difficulties, was of great importance. Ap-  
plication was made to Berne for assist-  
ance; as the besiegers were anxious to avail  
themselves of the opportunity, foreseeing  
that a reconciliation between the contend-  
ing parties would at once deprive them of  
every hope of success.

Notwithstanding the liberal supplies,  
which he derived from the munificence of  
the pope, Frederic was soon convinced of  
the impossibility of continuing the con-  
test; and determined, accordingly, by  
every reasonable concession, to divert the  
gathering storm. Finding, however, that  
nothing short of unconditional submission  
would satisfy his implacable rival, he for  
a long time hesitated what course to pur-  
sue. Now resolving to put himself at the  
head of the brave Tyrolese, on whose cou-  
rage and fidelity he could depend; now  
listening

CHAP. listening to the mild admonitions of pru-  
 XIV. dence, and preparing to act as she directed.  
 Conciliatory measures were warmly recommended by the duke of Bavaria, who undertook to soften the resentment of Sigismund, and thus prevailed upon Frederic to comply.

On the day appointed for the appearance of the duke of Austria at Constance, Sigismund invited the most distinguished members of the council to witness this extraordinary spectacle : A spacious hall was chosen for the ceremony ; and Sigismund, more fully to gratify his pride, placed himself at it's extremity. Frederic at length appeared. He was supported between the duke of Bavaria and the elector of Brandenburg, each of whom held him by an arm. At his entrance he knelt thrice in token of submission ; when Sigismund, addressing him with dignity, in a loud and peremptory tone, inquired his business. To this question the duke of Bavaria replied, " Mighty  
 " king, at the request of my cousin, the  
 " duke of Austria, I earnestly entreat your  
 " majesty to pardon every offence, which  
 " he

“ he may have committed, either against  
 “ your sacred person, or the venerable  
 “ council over which you so honourably  
 “ preside. Most willingly does he resign  
 “ himself, and all his possessions to your  
 “ disposal, placing unbounded confidence  
 “ in your clemency. At the same time,  
 “ he declares himself ready to bring back  
 “ the pope, provided you will pledge your  
 “ royal word, that his person and pro-  
 “ perty shall be respected.” The em-  
 peror, raising his voice, now demanded,  
 “ Will duke Frederic himself ratify this  
 “ promise?” “ I will,” answered the duke,  
 in accents scarcely articulate, from con-  
 fusion; “ and most humbly do I solicit  
 “ your pardon.” The melancholy tone in  
 which he uttered this short and broken  
 sentence, pierced the heart of Sigismund,  
 who immediately replied; “ It is, indeed,  
 “ most afflicting to us, that you should  
 “ ever have needed it !” \*

\* Muller gives a very interesting account of the whole ceremony, and is always so exact in producing the authorities, from which his information is derived, that I follow him without hesitation. (Ib.)

Encouraged

CHAP. Encouraged by this softened tone of  
XIV. voice, the duke proceeded to take the oath of allegiance, and surrendered all his possessions into the emperor's hands ; with the express declaration, that he would be content to receive back such parts only, as he in his bounty might condescend to restore.

The ceremony now concluded, Sigismund turned to the Italian prelates with an air of triumph, and addressed them in the following words : " Ye know, reverend fathers, from experience, the power and consequence of the house of Austria. Let the scene, to which ye have just been witnesses, instruct you what an emperor of Germany can effect !"

Sigismund, whose vanity was not yet fully satisfied, gave immediate directions to his troops to take possession of the dominions, which Frederic had surrendered. The order was executed without delay. But upon their preparing to enter the Tyrol, they found that duke Ernest, Frederic's brother, had put it in such a posture of defence, that the attempt would be

be attended with imminent danger; and the project was, in consequence, abandoned. CHAP. XIV.

The dispute with the duke of Austria being at length terminated, the attention of the council was next directed toward the pope; and the elector of Brandenburg received positive directions to bring him back, either by entreaty or by force. Forsaken by all, John suffered himself, without the least resistance, to be conducted to a fortress in the vicinity of Constance. The situation, to which he was reduced, was sufficient to excite the commiseration of his most inveterate foes. All regard for the dignity of his station was laid aside; his faults alone were remembered. Even the vices of his earliest youth were brought forward, and painted in the blackest colours\*.

\* This, however, was an unnecessary task; since it required not the aid of exaggeration to render odious such a character as his. Dr. Mosheim expressly says, that he was destitute of every principle, both of religion and probity. III. 405.

On



CHAP. On the twenty-ninth of May the council  
XIV. proceeded to pass sentence upon the uni-  
1416. versal sovereign of the christian world. He  
was declared guilty of simony ; of having  
lavished the revenues of the church for  
the gratification of his inordinate passions ;  
and finally, of having offended the pious  
by the shameful publicity of his vices. In  
consequence of these crimes, it was una-  
nimously voted, that he was unworthy  
any longer to fill the elevated station, to  
which he had been injudiciously raised.

This resolution was no sooner taken, than  
a deputation of cardinals was named to  
communicate it to the pope. Convinced  
that opposition could no longer avail,  
the degraded pontiff received them with  
cheerfulness ; and making a virtue of  
necessity acknowledged, in the presence  
of several witnesses, that he willingly re-  
signed every claim to the apostolic chair.  
But his former duplicity having justly de-  
prived him of all title to confidence, he  
was committed to the custody of the elec-  
tor Palatine, to be confined in the castle  
of Heidelberg. There he remained till the  
year

year 1418, when upon paying a considerable ransom he was set at liberty, with the consent of Martin, who then filled the papal throne. No sooner had he recovered his freedom, than he hastened to Florence, to throw himself at the feet of Martin, who immediately conferred upon him the dignity of cardinal with the bishopric of Frescati. His constitution, however was so completely ruined by the irregularities of his youth, that it was little calculated to struggle against the storms, to which his maturer age was exposed.\*

Meanwhile, the siege of Baden was prosecuted with unabating vigour; and the besiegers having at length effected a breach in the walls, the town surrendered upon condition that the confederates should restore it, in case they should fail in reducing the castle. But the Swiss were no sooner informed of the reconciliation, which had taken place between Frederic and Sigismund, than they redoubled their efforts.

\* Muller informs us, that he died shortly after his enlargement. (Ib.)

CHAP. Additional cannon being brought from  
 XIV. Zurich and Lucerne, a breach was made,  
 sufficiently practicable to justify an assault. Both parties now displayed the most heroic valour; yet, after a day of vigorous exertions little ground was gained. The garrison however had suffered so severely, that they offered to capitulate; and the besiegers were so eager to get possession of the fortress, that few difficulties occurred in arranging the terms.\*

The suspicions entertained by the confederates, respecting the emperor's intentions, were now fully verified: for immediately after he had gratified his inordinate vanity with the humiliation of Frederick, he sent orders to the Swiss to desist from farther hostilities. But finding his injunctions disregarded, and that they were determined at all events to retain possession of Baden, he deputed the counts of Toggenburg and Neuchatel to summon them to resign it, as a fief belonging to the

Id. ib.

imperial

imperial crown. But they arrived too CHAP. late: for as they approached the walls, XIV. they beheld the citadel in flames; the confederates having preferred the sacrifice of that important fortress, to an open rupture with Sigismund. Incensed at this act of ferocity, the ambassadors complained in bitter terms of a measure, which they justly regarded as offensive to the paramount authority of their master; while the Swiss alleged in their own justification, that the hostile plans pursued by Frederic, since his reconciliation with the emperor, had rendered that measure indispensably necessary to their own security.

Nothing now remained for the confederates, but to divide the spoil. For this purpose a diet assembled at Zurich, and came to the following resolutions: that Berne should retain possession of all her conquests in the Argau; that Lucerne should keep Sursee, and Zurich Knonau; but that the remaining territory should be conjointly governed by the six cantons, by whose combined valour it had been

X 2

acquired

CHAP. acquired.\* The deputies of Uri protested, in  
 XIV. the most energetic terms, against the whole transaction, which they represented as highly disgraceful to the Helvetic character. During the heat of debate, one of them addressed the assembly in language which would have done honour to a Roman senator, in the proudest days of Roman virtue: "We ought to recollect, my friends, " that the war in which we have engaged, " was not occasioned by any quarrel of our " own. It was in the cause of religion that " we fought. Can it be consistent then " with the strict principles of equity, for " us to appropriate to our own use the " spoils of a sovereign, from whom we " have received no recent injury; and " this too, during the existence of a truce?

\* Zürich, Lucerne, Schweitz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glaris; for Berne was left out, on account of the acquisitions which she had made in the Argau. This is the first instance of the kind, that we meet with in Helvetic history. This species of joint sovereignty was productive of an essential change in the politics of Switzerland, and required a degree of disinterestedness and patriotism which is rarely to be found in human transactions.

" Whatever

“ Whatever we have conquered, we are CHAP.  
 “ bound to restore to Sigismund, that we XIV.  
 “ may thus enable him to do justice to  
 “ an oppressed and unhappy prince.  
 “ Such are our sentiments. They are the dic-  
 “ tates of hearts unseduced by interest, and  
 “ which value glory beyond all the trea-  
 “ sures of the earth. But should they un-  
 “ happily be productive of no salutary ef-  
 “ fects, it is our decided resolution to ac-  
 “ cept no share of the plunder: for our  
 “ fathers taught us that honesty is the wi-  
 “ sest policy, and we are determined ever  
 “ to observe the golden precept with fide-  
 “ lity\*.” The plain language of truth was  
 no longer calculated for the ears of the con-  
 federates. The integrity of the Uriters was  
 ridiculed, as a weakness unworthy of states-  
 men; and was, in fact, a weakness of which  
 statesmen are seldom guilty.

Such were the advantages, which the  
 Helvetic republics derived from the council  
 of Constance. In the space of a few  
 weeks they tore from the house of Austria

\* Muller, ib.

CHAP. a considerable part of its hereditary pos-  
 XIV. sessions. Nothing now appeared wanting,  
 but a *legal title*; and for the acquisition of  
 that they trusted to the distress of Sigis-  
 mund. At first, indeed, he thought it due  
 to the dignity of his station to receive their  
 offers with disdain, and to declare his re-  
 solution; if they refused to listen to terms  
 of accommodation, of recovering the dis-  
 puted provinces by force of arms: But he was  
 too well acquainted with the character of  
 the Swiss, to believe the undertaking prac-  
 ticable. In a little time therefore an ar-  
 rangement took place, by which the em-  
 peror sacrificed the interests of Austria to  
 his own immediate necessities\*.

Every thing had succeeded so entirely  
 to Sigismund's wishes, that after the resig-  
 nation of Gregory XII. he undertook a

The republic of Berne paid 5,000 florins for the preser-  
 vation of their conquests, and the other cantons 4,500  
 only. The latter grant was however accompanied with a  
 proviso, that it might at any time be resumed by the Aus-  
 trian family, on the repayment of the original sum, with  
 the addition of 6,000 florins for the expences of the war.  
 journey

journey into Spain; flattering himself, that the charms of imperial eloquence could not fail to overcome the scruples of Benedict XIII. who was now the only remaining pontiff, and had fixed his residence at Perpignan. But he soon experienced, to his extreme surprise, that he had been too sanguine in his anticipations. That prelate was peremptory in his refusal to abdicate, and defended his claims with infinite address. The emperor however so far succeeded, that Ferdinand, king of Arragon, who had hitherto supported Benedict in his vain pretensions, now abandoned his interests. The Spaniard's protection being withdrawn, the council proceeded to pass sentence; and having declared him guilty of contumacy, heresy, and whatever else was most heinous in the estimation of church-men, they formally deposed him from St. Peter's chair.

CHAP.  
XIV.

Too vain to forego the ungenerous gratification of a rival's disgrace, Sigismund on his departure for Spain left Frederic under a guard at Constance, where he was hourly exposed to fresh indignities. Additional

X 4

accusations



CHAP. accusations were alleged every day, to  
XIV. which the unhappy prince was compelled  
to answer before judges, blindly devoted  
to his enemy, and prepared to execute his  
harshest mandates.

He was not of a temper, however, tamely to submit. His disposition, naturally irritable, had by misfortune been rendered suspicious. Even the manly conduct of his brother, in arming the Tyrolese for his defence, was now regarded with a jealous eye: for he had been betrayed by so many of his friends, that he could no longer place confidence in any. Unable to support his present state of degradation, and desirous more nearly to investigate the measures which Ernest had adopted for the preservation of the Tyrol; he secretly withdrew from Constance, and thus exposed himself a second time to the resentment of the council, and incurred the imperial ban. Nor was it till after the return of Sigismund, and the election of a new pope, that he was reinstated in the full possession of his hereditary dominions.

Upon his arrival from Spain, Sigismund  
was

was received with the liveliest expressions of joy. The distinguished part, which he had hitherto acted in the motley drama of ecclesiastical reform, proved highly gratifying to the vanity of a man, whose whole happiness was placed in external objects. One thing, however, was still wanting to complete his glory, the restoration of the ancient discipline of the church. To the accomplishment of this important purpose, he now turned his thoughts. But the far greater number of the members of the council were too deeply interested in defeating the project, to enter into his views with honest zeal. So that whenever the emperor recommended the subject to their consideration, they constantly found means to elude the discussion of it, by urging the necessity of first electing a pope. While Sigismund insisted, that the reform ought of course to precede the election; an opinion, in which he was strenuously supported by the whole Germanic body. The dispute was carried on with great acrimony; but the result proved favourable, as is too frequently the case, to the cause of corruption.

CHAP.  
XIV.

CHAP. tion. Otho Colonna was in consequence  
 XVI. raised to the vacant chair, and assumed  
 1418. the name of Martin V.\*

Experience now plainly showed, that the friends of religion had been deceived. For though several principles had been previously established, as the basis of a future reform, the cardinals had no sooner secured their principal point, than they exerted themselves in opposition to all farther proceedings. Nor could all the efforts of those, who were seriously alarmed for the safety of the church, procure any real improvement: though the adverse party affected to introduce some trifling changes, by which they hoped to quiet the public mind; referring all questions of real importance to the discussion of a future council, which the new pope appointed to meet at Pavia†. Martin now dissolved the assembly, after loading the holy fathers with praises and benedictions for the eminent services which they had rendered to the

\* Mosheim III. 405.

† On the 20th of April, 1418.

christian world. The world however was of a different opinion, and doubted, whether so much time and money had been profitably expended in merely accomplishing the deposition of one pope, and the elevation of another in his place. CHAP.  
XIV.

Could any additional argument be wanted to prove how far the spirit of intrigue and interest prevailed in directing the proceedings of this celebrated synod, we need only recal to the reader's attention the melancholy fate of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague. The detail of this shameful transaction has been purposely reserved for the present moment, though they fell a sacrifice to the violence of religious zeal at an early period of the council.

Scarcely had Wickliffe's opinions found their way into the German universities, than new lights burst upon the human mind, and gave birth to a spirit of enquiry admirably calculated to dispel the clouds of error and superstition, and exhibit christianity in its purest splendour. His writings became an object of too general curiosity, to escape the observation of Huss. Their bold stile  
of

**CHAP.** of reasoning was in perfect unison with the  
 XIV. sentiments of that pious man, and in a  
 short time engrossed his attention.

Huss was not less distinguished\* for the depth of his erudition, than for the unblemished purity of his character. The energy indeed, with which he defended the cause of morality, sometimes transgressed the bounds of prudence; since it led him in the vehemence of dispute, to disregard the quality of the person, against whom his censures were aimed. But his integrity, which resisted the temptations of wealth, and braved the resentment of power, must furnish his excuse. In that age, the mild voice of persuasion might have pleaded for ever with ineffectual zeal, while the unqualified fervor of the enthusiast kindled terror and conviction in the coldest breasts.†

No sooner did he venture openly to inculcate opinions, which were deemed heretical by the blind bigotry of the age, than he was accused before the archbishop of

\* Mosheim, III. 406.

† Ibid.

Prague,

Prague, who was easily persuaded to cen-  
 sure Wickliffe's principles, as contrary to  
 the established doctrines of the church.  
 This premature sentence was, in fact, a  
 tacit reproach upon the majority of the  
 Bohemian professors, who for the most  
 part embraced the new tenets ; and began  
 publicly to tax the metropolitan, with in-  
 justice in having collectively condemned  
 articles, of which he had not seriously as-  
 certained the heterodoxy.

Huss, however, plainly discerned that  
 Wickliffe's name was assumed by his ad-  
 versaries as a cloke for their real designs.  
 But as he was known to possess considerable  
 credit with Wenceslaus (by whose patro-  
 nage he was raised to the important post  
 of *Rector*), they dropped the prosecution,  
 convinced that the moment was not yet ar-  
 rived when they could urge it with any  
 prospect of success.

Such was the state of things, when a  
 council assembled at Pisa, for the avowed  
 purpose of terminating all the disorders of  
 the church. Following the example which  
 had been set by the university of Paris,

CHAP.  
XIV.

CHAP. Huss and his adherents declared in behalf  
 XIV. of the council, although the archbishop  
 warmly espoused the cause of Gregory  
 XII. This difference of sentiment, upon so  
 essential a point, re-kindled the dormant  
 flame. Huss was again attacked for the  
 singularity of his opinions, while he retorted  
 in vague and general declamations upon  
 the vices and corruption of the church.  
 The current of popular opinion ran strong-  
 ly in favour of the *new* doctrines. The ne-  
 cessity of a reform was insisted upon by men  
 of every description, those only excepted,  
 who were personally interested in the sup-  
 port of existing abuses. Even the lower or-  
 ders of ecclesiastics united in the general cry,  
 and thundered from their pulpits against  
 the licentious lives of their superiors. The  
 avarice, intemperance and tyranny of the  
 mitred clergy were every where a subject  
 of satire and complaint.

At a time when the public mind was  
 universally agitated by discussions of this  
 nature, it is no wonder that Huss was  
 heard with attention and with applause.  
 Opposition gave fresh energy to his cha-  
 racter,

racter, and he at length ventured publicly <sup>CHAP.</sup> to assert, that the laity would be fully <sup>XIV.</sup> authorised in stripping the clergy of their superfluous wealth, as the shortest and surest means of restoring the discipline of the church. It is not surprising that a doctrine so repugnant to the interests of the clergy, should be branded with every opprobrious epithet which the violence of party could suggest. Though Huss was no stranger to the perils which surrounded him, honour forbade him to recede. On the contrary, his perseverance was augmented by opposition, and he even ventured to recommend the use of the scriptures in the mother tongue.\* It was now, for the first time, that the archbishop began seriously to be alarmed. He felt the weakness of his cause, for he knew that the religion of Rome was materially different from that which is inculcated by the gospel of Christ.

Of all the books, that genius and philosophy have presented to the world, none

\* Meibem, vol. III 400.

perhaps



CHAP. perhaps has contributed more effectually to  
XIV. the overthrow of papal power, than the Gospel. The grand arcanum of popish policy was to conceal the Book of Truth, like the sanctuary of the Jewish tabernacle, from the profane gaze of the vulgar. The prelate now perceived that nothing was left but to accuse Huss, as an innovator and Heretic. In order to give colour to the charge, he caused the writings of Wickliffe to be publicly burnt, and commanded the rector to quit the university. But this rash proceeding served only to augment the number of Huss' disciples. So averse are mankind from persecution!

Thus far had the controversy proceeded, when the council assembled at Constance. Huss had been repeatedly cited to appear at Rome, but he was too well acquainted with the vindictive spirit of the Roman clergy, to obey the summons. But having now received letters of safe conduct from the emperor, he entertained no apprehensions of danger, in undertaking a journey to Constance. This determination, has by some writers, been taxed with rashness.  
But

But what mortal foresight could guard CHAP. XIV.  
 against a deed, which is unequalled in the  
 annals of human treachery? Huss was no  
 stranger to the violence of his opponents. He  
 knew that he had no lenity to expect, but he  
 knew them likewise to be men, and as such  
 believed that their hearts were neither dead  
 to the call of honour, nor callous to the  
 feelings of humanity. No sooner however  
 had he entered Constance, attended by his  
 faithful friend and disciple, Jerome of  
 Prague, than to their utter astonishment,  
 and the confusion of the whole Bohemian  
 nation, they were both arrested and con-  
 fined.

Sigismund was sensibly affected at this  
 daring outrage to his authority. In the  
 bitterness of his grief, he wrote a letter to  
 Prague, in which he expressed himself in  
 the following terms: "God only knows the  
 "anguish, that I endure! He alone can  
 "tell the efforts, which I have made in de-  
 "fence of Huss. But all is vain! The Bo-  
 "hemians, who were present, will bear wit-  
 "ness to the truth of my assertions. More  
 "than once have I threatened to quit this  
 VOL. II. Y "city.

CHAP. "city. But the fathers of the church in-  
 XIV. "sist, that if I oppose the legal exercise of  
 "justice, their mission must terminate;  
 "and, in that case, I alone shall be ac-  
 "countable to the world for all the mischief  
 "which may ensue. What answer can  
 "I oppose to arguments like these? No-  
 "thing, alas! remains, but patiently to  
 "submit to the necessity of the times\*.

The foregoing epistle gives us a perfect insight into the emperor's character. The natural integrity of an honest heart is plainly discernible amidst the fears and irresolutions of bigotry. The fathers were acquainted with his infirmity, and knew how easily he was intimidated by religious scruples. At the same time, they employed the most ingenious casuists to assuage his doubts, with regard to this atrocious breach of public faith. The arguments used were exactly calculated for the understanding of him, to whom they were addressed; and turned upon that most abominable of all principles, which was ever devised as a

\* Schmidt, VII. xiv.

snare for credulity, THE GUILT OF KEEP-  
 ING A PROMISE TO A HERETIC\*. They <sup>CHAP. XVI.</sup>  
 artfully represented to him, that no oaths  
 were binding, if repugnant to the interests  
 of the church. When her glory was at  
 stake, all earthly considerations vanished.  
 It was the indispensable duty of every hu-  
 man being to embrace her defence with  
 blind submission, and to strike the blow, if  
 commanded, without presuming to enquire  
 the name of the victim.

Finding himself abandoned by the em-  
 peror, Huss demanded a public trial. The  
 request was granted, though not without  
 manifest reluctance. But though compel-  
 led involuntarily to acquiesce, his enemies  
 resolved that he should derive no advan-  
 tage from the concession, and it plainly  
 appeared from the indecent violence and  
 confusion of the first session, what kind of  
 treatment he must expect.

At a subsequent meeting, he was allowed  
 to answer to a few only of the numerous  
 articles, which were preferred against him.

\* Schmidt, ib.

CHAP. He was accused of asserting that, "a vicious pope was no pope with regard to spiritual power, and could not therefore exercise any legal authority over the faithful." XIV. The charge being read, he modestly requested the assembly to point out the heretical tendency of such an opinion, before he was required to recant. But as this was no easy task, the judges (in order to avoid any difficulties of a similar nature, which the ingenuity of the criminal might raise) came at once to the profligate decision, "that it was unworthy of men, endued with the gift of the holy spirit, to make use of any arguments to confute a heretic. It was their sole duty to punish him."\* Recantation, or death, were the only alternatives offered; from this time all conferences ceased.

Influenced alike by the suggestions of policy, and the feelings of humanity, Sigismund employed every argument, which compassion could dictate, to overcome the firmness of the prisoner. Huss was inflexible, and rejected every proposition with

\*Id. ib.

noble

noble disdain, as unbecoming the dignity of his character. "He had stood forth,"

CHAP.  
XIV.

"he said, "the champion of truth, unbiased by motives of interest or of ambition, and impelled solely by the conviction that a reform was necessary in the Christian church. With sentiments like these he had boldly engaged in the undertaking, and preferred exposing himself to the severest tortures, rather than subscribe to errors which he had so repeatedly exposed, and which his conscience taught him to reject."

Sentence being now passed upon him as an incorrigible heretic, he was delivered over to the civil magistrate for execution. When conducted to the stake, his behaviour was undaunted, and every way worthy of his former life. With a resolute, but placid countenance, he supported the agonies of a lingering death. The fortitude of the stoic was softened by the benevolence of the christian, and his last prayers were offered to heaven for the cause of truth, the triumph of which he anticipated with prophetic rapture.

CHAP.

XIV.

Jerome, who in a moment of weakness had consented to retract his opinions, felt his courage revive at the glorious example of his martyred friend, and heroically expiated his error amidst the flames, singing praises to his Redeemer. Poggio, an Italian, who was successively secretary to several popes, and who was himself an eye-witness to this cruel spectacle, compares his death to that of Socrates\*.

The fatal consequences, which arose from this atrocious violation of a solemn promise, with the subsequent victories of the renowned Zisca, are foreign to the present subject. But they should serve as a tre-

\* Mosheim will furnish the inquisitive reader with many interesting details respecting this iniquitous transaction; nor does he hesitate to accuse the enemies of Huss with having employed all the arts of corruption, in order to accomplish his death. In a note, he inserts the following passage, extracted from the *Diarium Hussiticum* of Lau. Bizinius. *Clerus perversus, precipue in regno Bohemie et Marchionatu Moraviae, condemnationem ipsius (Hussii) CONTRIBUTIONE PECUNiarum et modis aliis diversis procuravit.*

Mosheim III. 412.

mendous

mendous lesson to the advocates of perse-  
 cution, and teach them, that though fire  
 and the sword may deliver them for a while  
 from the attacks of individuals, they can  
 neither silence reason, nor extirpate truth.

CHAP.  
 XIV.



## CHAPTER XV.

*Insurrection in the Valais—War with the Duke of Milan—Battle of St. Paul—Troubles in Appenzel—The Rhetian League.*

CHAP.  
XV.

WHILE the attention of the greater part of Europe, and particularly of the Helvetic cantons, was directed toward the proceedings of the council of Constance, the inhabitants of the Valais took up arms against their governor and the bishop of Sion, both of whom were descended from the illustrious house of Raron. During the late irruption of the confederates into the Levantine vale, that powerful family had espoused the party of the duke of Milan, and thereby excited the resentment of the Swiss. But before we enter more minutely into the events of the Italian war, it will be requisite

requisite to advert to the causes, from which this insurrection arose.

CHAP.  
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The Valais was divided into seven districts or communities, all of which were distinguished by peculiar exemptions, and formed so many independent republics, connected together, by a federative league. Since the days of Charlemagne, the bishops of Sion had invariably enjoyed a feudal pre-eminence over the whole confederacy; and exercised the right of criminal jurisprudence by the delegated authority of a governor: Yet as the nice boundaries between prerogative and privilege had never been correctly traced, each party was exposed to continual encroachments, which frequently led to hostilities. For as, on the one hand, the episcopal prerogatives were far greater than was consistent with the essence of a free constitution; so on the other, the immunities enjoyed by the people were of a nature to inspire them with the love of liberty, without being sufficient fully to establish it.

Such was the state of things, when the powerful family of Raron, having at length united

CHAP. the highest civil and ecclesiastical dignities,  
 XV. left no means untried to substitute to their  
 limited jurisdiction an independent authority. For this purpose they courted the friendship and alliance of the dukes of Milan and Savoy; and having received assurances of support, Guiscard with the arrogance natural to his temper, ventured even to speak of Helvetic valour in terms of reproach.\*

1414. Insults are usually resented with greater acrimony than injuries. The brave inhabitants of Uri and Unterwalden were no sooner informed of his sarcasms, than they swore to afford him an early opportunity of displaying his prowess; and that they might redeem their pledge without loss of time, despatched troops to join the insurgents.

Guiscard, who was a co-burgher of Berne, applied to the senate in his distress; but he received for answer, that a co-burgher of Berne was never known to bear arms against the Helvetic confederacy; so that,

\* Stumpf. xii. Simler, Descript. Vales.

whatever

whatever might have been his former title, CHAP.  
XV. he had forfeited every claim to protection by his conduct during the Italian war. Explanations, however, took place on both sides, and at the intercession of Sigismund, all hostile preparations were suspended. But this was not sufficient to calm the apprehensions of Guiscard, who no longer confiding in the attachment of his allies; resolved to relinquish his office; hoping, by this partial sacrifice, to preserve his hereditary estates. But the spirit of insurrection, when once excited, is not easily appeased. The insurgents continued their persecutions; and having compelled the bishop to fly for shelter to the citadel of Sion, they laid waste his territory with fire and sword.

The ensuing year was marked by still 1415 greater outrages. The unhappy prelate was now attacked in his last retreat, and perceiving the impossibility of long escaping the fury of the rebels, sought refuge in the court of Amadeus, duke of Sa-

\* Tschudi, viii.

voy.

CHAP. VOY. To that prince he surrendered up  
 XV. his few remaining castles, declared himself  
 his vassal, trusting by this distinguished  
 mark of confidence to obtain a protector.  
 But gratitude was not among the virtues of  
 Amadeus. Having duly weighed all the  
 disadvantages of contending against a peo-  
 ple, whose valour they had tried in former  
 wars, he preferred the safer policy of eva-  
 cuating, for a bribe, the fortresses which  
 he had engaged to defend, and they were  
 instantly levelled with the ground.

The distresses of an ancient ally at length  
 excited the commiseration of the Berners,  
 while the excesses committed by the insur-  
 gents gave umbrage to the other cantons.  
 At a diet, summoned for the purpose, it  
 was resolved to reinstate the baron in all  
 his legal prerogatives; and measures were  
 accordingly adopted to enforce the decree,  
 when an unforeseen event gave a different  
 bent to the politics of Switzerland, and  
 turned her arms in another direction.

The communities of Munster and Arnen,

\* May, II, lvi.

† May, ib.

situated

situated at the eastern extremity of the Valais, expressed an earnest desire to be received into the alliance of the forest-cantons; and offered, as an inducement, to assist in the conquest of the vale of Ossola, toward which the ambitious views of that warlike people had been long directed.

This temptation was too strong to be resisted. The league was formed, and the expedition undertaken. With little opposition, their united forces reached the frontier of the Milanese; while the count of Cremagnola, who had been sent with orders to cover Italy, fell back at their approach, and even experienced the mortification of seeing Domo d'Ossola, the capital of this little province, taken and destroyed before his eyes.

The brave Valaisans, with the peril partook of the spoil, being admitted to a share in the conquest. Thus the bond of union was gradually cemented by additional ties, and similarity of manners, and an enthusiastic attachment to the cause of freedom, established a friendship more permanent than

CHAP. than any, which diplomacy, with all its  
XV. complex forms, was ever able to create\*.

1417. Pushing forward towards the lake of Lugano, the allied army drove the Milanese from all their posts, and after plundering the adjacent country, returned with a valuable booty, though without having effected any permanent settlement.

1418. On the renewal of hostilities, in the ensuing spring, no effort was left untried, which appeared calculated to engage the Berners in the war: but those wary politicians had already reaped so rich a harvest of glory, that nothing could tempt them to renew their toils, except the prospect of a proportionate reward. Besides, their partiality for the adverse party was daily increasing, as the violence of the insurgents rendered them obnoxious to every regular government.

This difference of sentiment, upon so important a point, gave birth to a spirit of animosity, which never afterward entirely subsided. The Berners made no

\* Stettler, iii.

secret of their intentions to support the CHAP.  
XV.  
house of Raron; who were now closely  
besieged in the castle of Sion; while the  
Lucerners as peremptorily declared their  
resolution of supporting their new allies.\*

At this important crisis, Sigismund arrived at Zurich: and being informed of the misunderstanding which subsisted between the Helvetic states, determined to go in person to the diet then sitting at Lucerne, with the double view of effecting a reconciliation between the contending parties, and engaging the whole confederacy to unite with him in making war against the duke of Milan.

This attempt proved so far successful, that it procured a safe retreat for the unfortunate family of Raron. The baroness and her children, being suffered to quit their asylum, repaired to Berne, where the affecting sight of persecuted beauty excited a general sentiment of indignation against her unfeeling subjects.

\* Tschudi.



CHAP. Perceiving that the current of popular  
XV.

opinion ran strongly in favour of coercive measures, the senate resolved to reduce the insurgents by force of arms, and to reinstate the illustrious exiles in all their legal rights. A small body of troops was immediately assembled, and placed under the command of Guiscard. But this force proving inadequate to any decisive measures, he confined himself to a predatory war; and, after ravaging the country for some days, was compelled to retreat before a body of armed peasants, who had collected in considerable numbers to oppose him.\*

While Zurich, Schweitz, Zug and Glaris were occupied in projects for the re-establishment of peace, the senate of Berne summoned Uri and Unterwalden to join her standard for the express purpose of quelling the rebellion. To this application she received for answer, "That according to the tenor of the Helvetic bond, the canton of Lucerne had a prior claim to

\* Stettler, Tschudi.

" their

“their assistance, and had actually demand- CHAP.  
 “ed it.” The Berners, in consequence, <sup>XV.</sup>  
 proposed, that in conformity to established  
 usage, the dispute between the insurgents  
 and the house of Raron should be referred  
 to arbitration. An offer of this nature could  
 not easily be rejected by any people, who  
 professed the smallest regard for the com-  
 mon principles of justice, and who were  
 anxious to preserve an appearance of ho-  
 nesty, even when they deviated most wide-  
 ly from its precepts. Several conferences  
 were, accordingly, held ; but such was the  
 obstinacy of the contending parties, that  
 the integrity of the Helvetic union was  
 more than once in danger of falling a sa-  
 crifice to a dispute, in which none of its  
 members were personally concerned.\*

Guiscard, meanwhile, was indefatigable  
 in his endeavours to recover his patri-  
 monial estates, and to revenge himself  
 upon his inveterate foes. Yet, where-  
 ever he directed his march, he found the

\* Stettler, Tschudi.

CHAP. enemy prepared to meet him, While the  
XV. insurgents were thus occupied in disputing  
every inch of territory with their former  
lord, the Berners passed the Sanetsberg,  
and carried off a considerable booty with-  
out suffering the smallest loss.

1419. At length, through the mediation of the  
neutral cantons, an armistice was con-  
cluded till the following year. Early in  
the spring a congress met at Zurich, in  
which it was agreed, that the final deci-  
sion of this important contest should be  
referred to the arbitration of eight persons,  
chosen from the neutral cantons. But  
the deputies from the Valais, having dis-  
covered that the sentence was likely to  
prove unfavourable, quitted Zurich in haste,  
and immediately after their departure hos-  
tilities recommenced with greater fury  
than ever.\*

This shameful violation of public faith  
excited such general indignation, that the  
confederates unanimously resolved to take

\* Tschudi, z.

signal

signal vengeance upon the offenders. A body of five thousand men was accordingly assembled in the vicinity of Thun, with orders to penetrate into the Valais, through the defiles of those stupendous mountains which separate it from the canton of Berne, and which are scarcely passable even during the few summer months. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, however, and the difficulties which presented themselves at every step, all obstacles were rapidly surmounted. The confederates entered the Valais, and defeated the insurgents in several skirmishes, though they were unable to bring them to a general engagement.

The result of this expedition having by no means answered the public expectation, almost all the cantons now manifested a disposition to co-operate with Berne in a general attack, and another army was accordingly raised, amounting to little less than thirteen thousand men. Having passed the Grimsel, they laid the whole country under contribution, without meeting an

Z 2

enemy

CHAP.  
XV.

CHAP. enemy to oppose their progress. This

XV.

triumph, however, was of short duration: for a sudden fall of snow exposing them to the danger of being cut off from all communication with Berne, and consequently of starving in a country which was unable to furnish the necessary supplies, they hastened back with precipitation, though not without loss, as a flying body hung upon their rear, and annoyed them greatly during their retreat.\*

1420. All parties were by this time grown weary of a war, which exhausted their resources, without affording an adequate recompense. By mutual consent, therefore, the decision of existing differences was referred to the duke of Savoy, who terminated the contest by an equitable award.† Thus ended a dispute which would scarcely merit the reader's attention, did it not afford the first example of any internal quarrel between the different members of the Helvetic confederacy.

\* Tschudi.

† May gives the particulars of the treaty. II. lix.

Among

Among a people, naturally restless, no CHAP  
XV.  
 permanent tranquillity could prevail. No sooner, therefore, was the house of Raron restored to its ancient splendour, than the cantons of Uri and Unterwalden revived their former project of a joint attack on the Milanese. As a temptation to the rest of their allies, they magnified the advantages which the confederacy might derive from the possession of an extensive territory on the frontiers of Italy. By commanding all the passes of the St. Gothard, a handful of men would be able to defend their native country against a host of foes. While in a commercial point of view, the object was no less important: the communication with Lombardy would become uninterrupted, and thus secure to them an abundant supply of grain in all cases of emergency.

The baron of Sax, lord of Bellinzona, 1421.  
 had recently contracted an alliance with the cantons of Uri and Unterwalden, who promised to assist in a projected expedition against the duke of Milan. But the

Z 3

open

CHAP. open character of mountaineers was by no  
 XV. means a match for the duplicity of a  
 people, who consider deceit and treachery  
 as the most essential qualities of a states-  
 man. Thus, while they reposed entire  
 confidence in the integrity of their new  
 ally, intelligence arrived that he was ac-  
 tually carrying on a secret correspondence  
 with the duke, of which they were to be-  
 come the destined victims. Convinced  
 that no time was to be lost, a detachment  
 was sent to secure Bellinzona; and the  
 commission was executed with so much  
 dispatch, that they were actually masters  
 of the town, before the enemy was apprised  
 of their march.\*

Having convened the principal inhabit-  
 ants, the victors descanted upon the per-  
 fidy of the baron in terms of the greatest  
 severity, affecting to consider his breach  
 of faith as an adequate justification of

\* Tschudi, gives the above account; but, according to  
 May, the Swiss were the aggressors, and were actuated  
 solely by ambitious motives. II. liii.


their own conduct. "It was not," they CHAP. insisted, "from a spirit of ambition, nor <sup>XV.</sup> from views of private aggrandisement, but from a necessary attention to their own security that they had been tempted to draw the sword. In proof of this, they were ready (they said) even then to purchase the town, with all its dependencies." Such an offer to a captured city being too seducing to be withstood, the conditions were easily settled, as the burghers consented to every demand.

The duke of Milan became now as clamorous in his complaints, as if he had been unconscious of all sinister designs; and insisted upon immediate redress. But the confederates turned a deaf ear to all his remonstrances, and availing themselves of the misunderstanding which subsisted between him and the emperor, obtained from the latter a formal grant of their newly acquired territory.

In this precarious state things remained 1429. a considerable time, neither party appear-



CHAP. ing desirous to commence hostilities, but

XV.  confining themselves exclusively to measures of defence. Philip, however, had his eye continually fixed on Bellinzona, and waited only for a favourable moment to possess himself of that important place. That moment quickly arrived. Lulled into security by the apparent inactivity of the enemy, the garrison grew daily more remiss, while the duke indefatigably employed himself in seducing the citizens; till having secured the majority in his interest, he surprised the citadel, while the soldiers were engaged in celebrating a religious festival.\*

He was too well acquainted however with the temper of his adversaries, to suppose that they would sit down contented with the loss. He therefore vigorously attacked the small detachments which were scattered over the Levantine vale, and having driven them to the fastnesses of the St. Gothard, fortified all the passes.†

\* May, ib.

† Id. ib.

A general

A general spirit of indignation spread itself over the forest-cantons. "To arms!" "To arms!" was the universal cry. "Let us march to Milan, and teach the perfidious Italians what Helvetic valor can achieve!" Such were the exclamations, which burst from every mouth. "Why waste our time," cried the ardent youth, "in useless preparations? The fertile plains of Lombardy will furnish ample provisions." But they were answered by the wiser part of the assembly, "That something more was requisite for the subsistence of an army, than the visionary stores which plunder might supply.\*"

The troops being at length assembled, directed their course toward Milan. Four hundred archers formed the van. The main body, consisting of three thousand men, followed at a convenient distance; while the rear, composed entirely of the militia of Schweitz and Glaris, remained a day's march behind. From examining

\* May, III. ii.

the

CHAP. the strength of this little armament, we  
 XV. may without hesitation pronounce that a  
 change had taken place by no means creditable to the Helvetic character. There was a time when the whole nation would have flown to arms, to avenge the national honour. But those days of romantic enthusiasm were past. Charms of glory no longer balanced the attractions of interest, and a correct supply of their respective contingents was deemed a sufficient fulfilment of duty.\*

Philip, apprised of their movements, assembled an army of eighteen thousand men, under the counts of Carmagnola and Pergola, two of the most consummate generals of the age. The great object of the Italian commanders was to disguise their numbers, that the enemy might fall an easier prey. For this purpose their troops were posted behind the walls of Ballinzona, and in the adjacent villages, where, from

\* May, II. lüii.

the

the nature of the country, no just estimate CHAP.  
 could be formed of their superior force. XV.

Upon receiving intelligence that a body of six hundred Swiss had been sent on a foraging party, while the rest were advancing along the banks of the Ticino with little order or regularity, Carmagnola thought fit to change his plan, and resolved to attack the enemy without loss of time. Having made his dispositions accordingly, he ordered Pergola with a numerous cavalry to begin the engagement, and to endeavour if possible to cut off the detachment, while he followed at the head of the infantry.

The confederates, who had not the remotest idea of encountering any obstacles in their route, were seized with dismay at the unexpected charge; and their consternation augmented at the appearance of Carmagnola advancing with his whole army, amidst the distant windings of the vale. As they were already engaged with Pergola, it was in vain to attempt a retreat. Nothing therefore was left, except

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cept to gain an eminence, where from the nature of the ground they could not be surrounded, and to sell their lives as dearly as possible. But ere this could be accomplished, their loss was considerable, and the van had suffered severely. The banner of Lucerne was more than once in danger; but the standard-bearer, placing it under his feet, resolved that nothing should force him from the spot, so long as he had life to defend it. The men of Uri, Zug, and Unterwalden advanced to the succour of their exhausted friends; engaging with the desperate courage of men who were resolved to die. The standard-bearer of Uri fell. An Italian seized the banner, and was carrying it off in triumph; when a gallant mountaineer, who had witnessed the fate of his companion, rushed forward to its rescue. With one hand he slew the foe; with the other he grasped the sacred pledge, and waving it on high, exclaimed in ecstasy, "We may fall, but it will be with glory!" \*

1830

\* Muller, ib.

Unfortunately for the Swiss, the closeness of the combat rendered their pikes and halberds in a great measure useless; yet in spite of every disadvantage, such was the obstinacy with which they fought, that Pergola deemed it advisable to dismount his cavalry, and to renew the combat on foot. At this important moment, the foraging party returned, and presenting an undaunted front, arrested the progress of the enemy, till their friends had time to retire to an inaccessible position\*. Being now convinced by personal experience of the courage and discipline of the Swiss, Carmagnola was unwilling to risk his laurels in a contest, where he had every thing to lose, and little to obtain. He accordingly resolved to draw off his troops, and fell back to Bellinzona, toward the close of the day; while the Swiss posted themselves behind the Mensa, a torrent, which descending from the Rhaetian hills, empties itself into the Ticino.

In this memorable engagement, which

\* Id. ib.

the

CHAP. the Swiss historians call the battle of St.   
 XV: Paul, from the day\* on which it happened, about four hundred perished on the side of the confederates, while the loss of the Italians exceeded a thousand men†. The fight commenced at nine in the morning, and lasted till dusk. Carmagnola continuing, during the whole time, to pour in fresh troops, in the room of those who were exhausted with fatigue, or disabled with wounds.

Scarcely were the combatants separated, when the contingents of Schweitz and Glaris appeared on the opposite bank. Their absence had been heavily felt, as they were the bravest of the Helvetic soldiery. The confederates had been too long accustomed to victory, to support a reverse of fortune with becoming fortitude. Unwilling to acknowledge the imprudence of their own conduct, they endeavoured to throw the blame upon the Schweitzers,

\* The festival of St. Paul.

† According to May the loss on both sides was much more considerable.

whom

whom they accused of unnecessary delay.\* CHAP. XV.  
 The proud spirit of the Schweitzers could ill brook this imputation, when the honour of their country was at stake. They accordingly objected, in the strongest terms, to a retrograde march: insisting, that it was necessary to recover the tarnished lustre of the Helvetic arms, before they turned their backs upon Italy. But the army had suffered too severely to accede to this proposal. Provisions likewise ran short, and if Carmagnola should decline a battle, nothing could be attempted, as they were entirely destitute of every implement requisite for a siege. Prudence therefore suggested the necessity of a retreat, which was immediately undertaken, Carmagnola suffering them to depart without quitting his entrenchments. But the Schweitzers, resolving to retrieve their credit by some action worthy of their former reputation, laid waste the country to the very gates of Bellinzona, and braved the enemy within their walls†.

\* Muller, ib.

† Id. ib.

Hitherto



CHAP. Hitherto no immediate bond of union  
 XV. had subsisted between the commonwealths  
 1423. of Berne and Zurich, though they were  
 closely connected by their reciprocal en-  
 gagements with the forest-cantons. But  
 finding that the limits of their respective  
 territories were daily approximating, they  
 thought it judicious to strengthen the al-  
 liance by additional ties. Ever faithful to  
 the same leading principle, they were  
 equally active in obeying the calls of am-  
 bition. By the transfer of a mortgage,  
 Zurich obtained possession of the county of  
 Kyburg, an acquisition of great import-  
 ance to the whole confederacy; as it formed  
 a barrier against the Austrians on the side  
 of Thurgau. Meanwhile the Berners, by a  
 similar negociation with the house of Savoy,  
 extended their jurisdiction on the southern  
 frontier\*.

1445 The fatal issue of the battle of St. Paul  
 was regarded by the Helvetic people as a  
 national stigma, which they were bound

\* Tschudi, X,

in honour to efface. An enterprise was accordingly planned for the invasion of the Milanese; but when the army assembled on the banks of the Mueso, it was found to amount to little more than four thousand men. With so inadequate a force, it was judged inexpedient to undertake the siege of Bellinzona, and till that important fortress was reduced, no material progress could be made.

A council of war was accordingly assembled, when the difficulty of the undertaking having been fully discussed, it was unanimously resolved to return, as nothing decisive could be attempted.

These repeated miscarriages produced so strong a sensation upon the public mind, that it appeared essential by some brilliant enterprise, to recover the credit of Helvetia, and revive the courage of her desponding sons. A body of five hundred men was selected for a rapid incursion into the vale of Ossola: and an attack on the town of Domo was so well concerted, that the garrison surrendered without an effort. The duke of Milan however, upon being

VOL. II.                      A a                      made

CHAP. made acquainted with the loss, despatched  
 XV. his whole force to retake it. But Carmagnola\* was no longer at their head. He had fallen a victim to the intrigues of a court. His successor, advancing with blind presumption, summoned the garrison to surrender; and threatened to give no quarter, in case the slightest resistance should be made. But the Swiss derided his menaces, declaring their resolution of defending the town to the last extremity†.

At the first alarm of the enemy's approach, messengers had been despatched to Switzerland, with intelligence of the danger to which the besieged were exposed. Every member of the confederacy was ordered to join the Helvetic standard, and in a few days the whole nation appeared under arms. But the troops of the forest-cantons, being first in readiness, united themselves with a small detachment from

\* According to May, the Milanese were still commanded by Carmagnola, but in this respect he differs from most of the Helvetic historians.

† May

Zug and Glaris, forming together a column of sixteen hundred men. Anticipating the renown which they were about to acquire, should they relieve the town, before their numbers were augmented by farther reinforcements, they prevailed upon their commanders to make the rash attempt. They ascended the steepest precipices in spite of every impediment, drove the Milanese from their entrenchments, and got possession of their artillery. They then advanced with incredible rapidity, arrived in sight of Domo, and encamped in a strong position in face of the besieging army. Assured that their presence would give animation to the garrison, they determined to wait the arrival of additional troops, before they risked a general action. Succours from all the cantons were on their march. Even the Berners had at length consented to furnish their contingent, though the expedition was undertaken in direct contradiction to their advice; as those cautious politicians foresaw the evils, which must inevitably result

A a 2

from

CHAP. from engaging too deeply in the politics  
 XV. of Italy\*.

Sixteen hundred Zurichers first joined the camp, and were speedily followed by others, raising the total number to upward of twenty thousand men. Confident of success, they now offered battle to the duke of Milan, who had taken the field in person; but he thought it prudent to decline the challenge by a precipitate retreat.

1426. This enterprise was conducted with so much ability, that it revived the ancient reputation of the Helvetic arms, and induced the duke to open a negotiation, which soon led to a permanent peace, on terms no less honourable than advantageous to his brave opponents†.

Such however was the distracted temper of the times, that tranquillity was no sooner

\* May, ib.

† According to May, the duke of Milan paid 22,000 florins to the confederates, in consideration of their claims on Bellinzona, and the vale of Ossola; and granted them many commercial privileges.

established

established in one quarter, than hostilities commenced in another. Scarcely had the confederates concluded a peace with Philip, before the flame of discord burst forth anew between the Appenzellers and the abbot of St. Gal.

Henry of Gundolsingen, who, upon the demise of the unfortunate Cuno, had been raised to the dignity of abbot, by pursuing a system directly contrary to that of his predecessor, succeeded ultimately in reconciling the turbulent minds of the Appenzellers to the limited jurisdiction of the abbey. But this celebrated foundation retained few vestiges of its ancient splendour\*. The learned labours of antiquity, which from the library of St. Gal had diffused light to surrounding nations, now lay neglected in a mouldering tower, a prey to moths and worms†.

Some acts, in the administration of Gun-

\* May, ib.

† We are indebted to Poggio for the preservation of several curious manuscripts, which would otherwise have perished in this convent.

dolfingen, having given offence to the council of Constance, they resolved to depose him, under pretence that he was incapable of fulfilling the important duties of his station. Conrad, a Benedictine monk, was elected to succeed him; but finding the convent overwhelmed with debts, and engaged in disputes with all its neighbours, he bid adieu to his new dignity, and returned to the tranquil retreat from whence he had so lately emerged.

Disgusted at these frequent changes, and regretting the mild jurisdiction of the virtuous Gundolfingen, the Appenzellers received his successor with such apparent marks of displeasure, that a renewal of hostilities appeared inevitable.

When summoned to perform the accustomed acts of allegiance, they peremptorily refused to acknowledge any superior except Gundolfingen; or to obey any civil officers, unless appointed by him.—In vain Mangistorf produced unquestionable documents, which proved the legality of his pretensions. “Documents, he was told, were not made for free men.

“It

“ It was by their swords, that they had ac- CHAP.  
 “ quired independence, and with them they XV.  
 “ were resolved to maintain it. Their free-  
 “ dom (they said) depended on no grants,  
 “ or charters. It was the gift of nature,  
 “ written upon the hearts of every indivi-  
 “ dual in characters, which no human pow-  
 “ er could ever efface\*.”

The most prudent part of the commu-  
 nity, who too frequently constitute the mi-  
 nority; attempted to persuade their coun-  
 trymen to remain contented with their pre-  
 sent condition. But it is the lot of expe-  
 rience to warn an infatuated people in vain.  
 Confiding in their strength, the far greater  
 number considered every civil institution,  
 which was necessary for the establishment  
 of due subordination among the different  
 ranks of society, as an infringement upon  
 the natural rights of man. Every thing  
 short of uncontrolled liberty was in their  
 estimation slavery. Whoever was oppressed  
 by the tyranny of established governments,  
 found protection and security amidst the

\* Muller, ib.



CHAP. mountains of Appenzel. But they were  
XV. received only on condition, that they should  
thenceforth renounce all feudal services,  
and make war against all civil institutions;  
for with a licentiousness truly democratical  
those bold republicans declared, that from  
the very moment a man set his foot on their  
soil, he was released from every social ob-  
ligation.

The Schweitzers alone, of all the Helve-  
tic people, still retained a commanding in-  
fluence over the minds of the Appenzellers;  
for to them they appeared the only true  
friends of freedom. Nor were they less  
strenuous assertors of the cause of liberty,  
for understanding her rights a little better.  
Among them the tide of passion had sub-  
sided, and enthusiasm was subjected to the  
mild sway of reason. So rigid indeed were  
their ideas of justice, that even when exas-  
perated by repeated acts of oppression,  
they never forgot what was due to them-  
selves, or to the legalised authorities of their  
country. While they restrained the abuse  
of power, they respected all it's equitable  
exertions,

By

By the Appenzellers all ties were equally disregarded. To the repeated remonstrances of the new abbot they replied, "that the tyranny of Cuno had dissolved all former compacts, and released them from every obligation of dependence." Convinced of the inefficacy of remonstrance, the abbot offered to refer the dispute to the Suabian towns; but his opponents refused to submit to any decree, which was not dictated by men equally independent with themselves. This was clearly pointing to the Helvetic confederacy; and Mangistorf, perceiving that their resolution was unshaken, thought it advisable to comply. The confederates on their part, consented with reluctance to accept the office; as they felt all the delicacy of a commission, in which they had equally to combat the prejudices of the one, and the violence of the other. At length, however, they complied; and appointed fourteen commissioners for that purpose, men of tried prudence and unquestioned probity. After ten months spent in continual researches, a day was fixed for the final decision of the question.

CHAR.  
XV.

CHAP. tion. The abbot attended in person, but  
 XV. the delegates from Appenzel came without  
 the necessary powers. Hence the assembly  
 was obliged to separate without having  
 adopted any conclusive arrangement\*.

Another meeting was held at Hunsfyl; but the Appenzellers persevered in their obstinate conduct. No answer could be extorted from them except, "that God and  
 " their swords had made them free, and  
 " that they would never consent to com-  
 " mit their liberties to the precarious jus-  
 " tice of human arbitrators.

A third conference took place at Lucerne. The commissioners from Appenzel besought the delegates to give no decree, since nothing could engage their countrymen to obey it. Disgusted at these repeated delays, the abbot pressed eagerly for a decision. Sentence was accordingly passed. It was dictated by a spirit of moderation and equity, which did honour to the integrity of the judges; but still, as is common in such cases, it proved satisfac-

\* Muller, ib.

tory to neither party. The sum stipulated, for the indemnification of the convent, was considered by the abbot as inadequate to the rights which he was ordered to relinquish; while the Appenzellers were exasperated at being obliged to purchase a blessing, which they already enjoyed in it's fullest extent\*.

HAP.  
CXV.


In vain Mangistorf appealed to the emperor, to the Germanic body, and to the Helvetic states. In vain the latter sent deputies to engage the Appenzellers to submit. From the moment that they ceased to speak of unlimited freedom, their advice had no longer any weight.

Experience had now fully evinced the inefficacy of negociation. But the terrors of religion were yet untried, and to them it was determined to have recourse. In the name and by the authority of the pope, the bishop of Constance laid under interdict the whole land of Appenzel. Instantly every ceremony of religion ceased. The warning-bell no longer summoned the faithful to the consecrated table. The

1425.

\* Id. ib.

contrite

CHAP. contrite sinner supplicated in vain for those  
 XV.  consoling rites, which inspire confidence to the departing soul. To the infant the mystic sign of regeneration was no longer administered; from the bride the nuptial benediction was withheld: funeral obsequies were denied to the dead\*.

The effect produced by this tremendous change was violent and instantaneous.—Overwhelmed with terror and astonishment, the aged of both sexes flocked in crowds to kneel before the doors of the churches. No priest appeared to open the sacred mansion. Forlorn, and hopeless, they returned to their homes.

In this moment of universal consternation, the Landamman proclaimed a general meeting. The day arrived. The assembly was numerous. Dejection and despair were no longer visible, except upon the countenances of those, whose nerves were enfeebled by the hand of time. The intrepid youth had already devised a remedy which was communicated to their

\* Muller, ib.

astonished countrymen, in nearly the following terms: "We understand very little  
 "of the efficacy of *words*," said one of them, addressing the assembly in a tone of confidence; "but we can discover no harm  
 "that an interdict can do us; for our grass  
 "grows equally well; and our cows are as  
 "fruitful as ever: But we are fully acquainted with the value of *things*; we  
 "know that priests are paid for performing  
 "the offices of religion, and that it will  
 "be our own fault if we suffer them to  
 "neglect their duty\*".

This advice was too congenial to the temper of his auditors, not to meet with a favourable reception. The priests were summoned to appear, when all who refused to comply, were ordered to quit the territory of the republic. Some, indeed, were strongly tinctured with the proud spirit of the nation, that in defiance of the magistrates they persisted to promulgate the ecclesiastical curse. But they soon found reason to repent their tamerity; as they

\* Muller, iB.

were

**CHAP.** were punished with unrelenting rigour, and  
**XV.** in some cases even with death. Many a  
 mass was now said, with a sword suspended  
 over the head of the trembling minister;  
 while a marriage, or a funeral, was preceded  
 by an armed band, to compel the performance of the appointed ritual\*.

When their neighbours avoided them, which they frequently did, from the dread of contamination, they entered their territory in hostile array, laid waste the country with fire and sword, and returned laden with spoil. The abbot of St. Gal was forced to fly for safety, and even the bishop of Constance suffered from their depredations. All communication between them and the adjacent states was totally interrupted. But as their wants were few, they were abundantly supplied by the produce of their mountains.

This continual struggle proved too much for the weak frame of Mangistorf, who soon fell a victim to vexation. He was succeeded by Egloff, a man of an intriguing

\* Muller, ib.

character,

character, and endowed with talents to **CHAP.**  
take advantage of every opportunity. By **XV.**  
his instigation, the bishop of Constance  
was induced to accuse the Appenzellers be-  
fore the knights of St. George. The me-  
morial was read with attention, but being  
unaccompanied with any promise of assist-  
ance, either in men or money, it lay neg-  
lected upon the table.

More successful were his endeavours to  
arm the count of Toggenburg, who had al-  
ready suffered from the invasions of his tur-  
bulent neighbours, and was eager to revenge  
his private wrongs under the specious pre-  
text of defending the church. But in order  
to give more effect to his measures, he soli-  
cited the co-operation of the confederates,  
many of whom were highly offended at  
the insolence of the Appenzellers. Unwil-  
ling to lose so fair an occasion of evincing  
their real sentiments, the senate of Zurich  
concluded a treaty with the count; while  
Glaris permitted her citizens to serve under  
his banner, though she declined from pru-  
dential motives to take an active part in  
the war.

With



CHAP. With an army of fifteen thousand men, Frederic encamped at Magdenau, in the vicinity of St. Gal; while another body, having crossed the mountains penetrated to Gaitz, a village situated at the foot of mount Gabis, was attacked by the enemy, on the very spot where they had formerly triumphed in the cause of freedom. The recollection of past success gave additional fire to their native courage. The Toggenburghers fled; but the Appenzellers, menaced on another quarter by a formidable force, were unable to avail themselves of their victory.

Being now joined by reinforcements from the Suabian league, Frederic resumed offensive measures, and penetrating into the vale of Gossau, set fire to the town. The Appenzellers no sooner beheld the flames from the heights, than they rushed down with the impetuosity of a torrent, and fell into an ambuscade, where they could only extricate themselves by the loss of many of their bravest troops. The count of Toggenburg attempted to pursue them; but, finding the passes guarded, he judged it prudent to desist. Several skirmishes ensued

sued between detached parties, which ge- CHAP.  
 nerally terminated in favour of the Tog- XV.  
 genburghers; and proved to their adver-  
 saries that, though their country could  
 never be conquered, they themselves were  
 not invincible.\*

Early in the following spring, a congress 1429.  
 met at Constance, for the restoration of  
 peace. For though the cantons were not  
 grieved to see the spirit of their haughty  
 neighbours humbled, they had privately de-  
 clared to Frederic, that they would neither  
 suffer them to be subdued, nor their con-  
 stitution to be altered. Nor was the ne-  
 gotiation difficult, as the most clamorous  
 of the demagogues were induced by recent  
 misfortunes seriously to listen to the sug-  
 gestions of prudence; and to throw them-  
 selves on the candour of their allies †.

The independence of Appenzel was  
 formally acknowledged; and the inhabi-  
 tants consented to pay an annual contri-  
 bution to the abbot, upon his specifically re-  
 nouncing all farther claims. The bishop of

\* Muller.


† May, II. xvii.

CHAP. Constance was also enjoined to revoke the  
 XV. interdict, and to grant absolution to those,  
 who had imbrued their hands in ecclesiastical blood\*.

From this period to the commencement of the war between Zurich and the other cantons, Switzerland enjoyed an uninterrupted state of domestic prosperity. But it was founded upon too precarious a basis, to be of long duration. The harmony and confidence, which formerly subsisted between the different members of the confederacy, and which is so essential to the existence of all federative governments, had received a fatal blow.

For more than a century the spirit of independence had been diffused over the happy regions of Helvetia. From the field of Ruthi it gradually extended, spreading comfort and wealth and prosperity in it's benignant career. Yet amidst the Alpine vallies, there still existed a people who pined beneath the yoke of slavery; a people too, who (so far as we are able to

\* Muller, ib.

trace their history) were alike distinguished, CHAP.  
XV.  
in the earliest times, by their courage, ,  
their probity, and their enthusiastic attachment to freedom.

Henry of Werdenberg, of the *white banner*, was among the most potent of the Rhaetian barons. Contemporary writers abound with anecdotes indicating the wretched state of degradation, to which his vassals were reduced. Their lives and property were left entirely at the disposal of wretches whom sordid tempers aptly qualified to be the tools of despotism. Among various instances of barbarity, they are said to have constrained the peasants to feed out of the same trough with their swine; meaning thus to render their spirits incapable of those generous sentiments, which instinctively instruct the heart, that servitude is not the natural state of man. A civil officer is accused of having carried off a beautiful damsel from her father's house, and forced her to submit to his licentious desires; while another is reported to have dishonoured a married woman, in the presence of her husband.

B b 2

There

CHAP.

XV.

There is no state of depression, from which insults like these will not awaken the heart of man.

But the voice of complaint was raised in vain. Werdenberg listened with an insulting smile, astonished at the temerity which could embolden these outcasts of society to pollute the ears of aristocracy with their despicable grievances. From the interference of superior power, it was now evident that no redress could be expected: and in such a situation man reverts to a state of nature, and resumes those rights, which timidity may compromise, but cannot alienate. From that moment he becomes judge in his own cause, and executes the sentence, which he has himself pronounced. All the ties, which bind him to society, are dissolved. He is an insulated being, whose only care is to provide for his own security. It was thus with the Rhätians. Camogasch, the father of the injured virgin, was an opulent farmer. No sooner was he made acquainted with his daughter's disgrace, than scorning the tardy forms of

of perverted justice, he sought the ravisher, and laid him dead at his feet. CHAP.  
XV.

Few among the Rhaetian nobles possessed a more extensive jurisdiction than the bishop of Coire. The present occupant of that wealthy see enjoyed the reputation of a consummate statesman, and an accomplished orator. But his administration was unpopular, and in the first act of government he was eminently deficient, the art of rendering his subjects happy. He appears, indeed, to have been one of those speculative politicians, whose science is confined to theory, and who are indebted for the character of wisdom to the brilliancy of their wit, rather than to the solidity of their understanding. It was scarcely to be expected that a person of this description should long preserve an amicable intercourse with the neighbouring states. Thus we find him engaged in continual disputes with the potent families of Razuns, Toggenburg, and Werdenberg. These petty hostilities gave rise to frequent scenes of anarchy, and exposed the peasantry to a series of vexations, which tended equally

B b 3

to

CHAP. to diminish their respect for government,  
 XV. and to alienate their affections from governors.

In a contest, which took place between the bishop and the citizens of Coire, the subject in controversy was referred to the arbitration of Zurich. But the award proving less favourable than the prelate expected, he entered into an alliance with Austria; hoping thus to intimidate his vassals into submission. The event, however, proved contrary to his expectation. For the treaty was no sooner published, than it created a general alarm; and awakening in the minds of that inoffensive people a strong sense of independence, led them to scrutinise the intentions of Providence, in forming such a creature as man.

That every system of equality, which is not founded upon the *equality of laws*, is both chimerical and impracticable, requires little ingenuity to demonstrate. But it is equally evident to a reflecting mind, that the benign views of the Creator could never have designed to call millions of beings into existence, for the sole pleasure or profit  
 of

of one. Opinions, like these, are so con-  
sonant to the feelings of the human heart,  
that they require no rhetoric to recommend  
them. Yet the name of him by whom they  
were communicated to the Rhætians, is  
buried in oblivion. The author of the  
GRISONS LEAGUE is unknown to posterity.

Within the jurisdiction of the abbey of  
Disentis, lies the romantic valley of Truns.  
The whole country from Ilanz to the source  
of the Rhine presents a series of the most  
picturesque objects, that were ever con-  
templated with delight and wonder by the  
eye of man. Here the loftiest summits of  
the Alps pour down their stupendous cata-  
racts in a thousand channels, giving birth  
to mighty rivers. From scenes of this gi-  
gantic character, the transition is instantane-  
ous to harmony and peace. The meadow  
spreads it's enamelled bosom, and the cot-  
tage reposes in the recesses of the quiet  
vale.

It was in a solitary grove, near the vil-  
lage of Truns, that the most respectable  
members of the adjacent hamlets assem-

B b 4

bled,



CHAP. <sup>XV.</sup> bled, in the dead of night, to confer about some general plan for their common preservation. They were sensible of their degraded condition, and keenly felt the injuries to which they were exposed. But no mean ambition, no sordid interest, kindled the sacred flame. Their very names are lost to posterity. And while the pompous mausoleum points out to the execration of mankind the faithless sycophant, who rose to titled infamy by flattery and peculation, the founders of Rhætian liberty moulder unnoticed in their native dust. It was the innate sentiment of freedom, the wish of establishing some system of equality in the administration of justice, but (above all) the noble feeling, which prompts us to promote the comfort and happiness of all our species, particularly of those who are connected with us, by friendship or consanguinity, which inspired the resolution necessary for the accomplishment of this arduous enterprise.

After examining their resources, they found that they had nothing to trust to, but activity and resolution. The love of liberty

berty, however, supplies it's votaries with every thing which is requisite to obtain it. CHAP. XV.

Accustomed from their earliest youth to the fatigues of a laborious life, their bodies were robust; and their souls were strangers to apprehension. Their wants likewise were few, for they were acquainted with no other pleasures, but those which nature furnishes in her simplest state, and which are ever within the reach of tastes uncorrupted by the fastidious enjoyments of polished society.

Such were the men, whom the genius of Rhætia assembled at Truns. An ancient tradition still exists, that they were in general persons dignified by age, and distinguished by their long *grey* beards. From this circumstance, as well as from their dress, which is said to have consisted of the grey clothing in Rhætia, the alliance common was subsequently denominated the GRISON LEAGUE\*.

Toward

\* In German *der Graue Bund*, and in our own language more properly the *Grey League*. From the nature of the country, likewise, which is near the source of several of the largest rivers in Europe, may probably be deemed the most elevated

CHAP. Toward the close of the winter, a de-  
 XV. putation, composed of the inhabitants most respectable for age and property, waited upon their haughty lords, respectfully representing to them the wishes of the whole community, for a milder and more equitable constitution. The message was accompanied by an offer of joining with the aristocracy, in the accomplishment of this meritorious undertaking \*.

A proposal so unexpected was heard with different sensations by those to whom it was addressed. By some it was received with rational benignity, by others it was rejected with insolence or contempt.

The abbot of Disentis, a prelate not less eminent for the liberality of his sentiments, than formidable from the extent of his domain, declared in favour of reform, which he considered both as necessary and just. His influence with the house of Ragusa was unbounded, and he exerted it in persuading the heirs of that illustrious family

elevated part of that quarter of the globe, it has been frequently called the *Upper League*.

\* Maffei, III. iii.

to yield to the necessity of the times, in-  
stead of fruitlessly struggling against the  
current of popular opinion. The young  
barons listened to his advice with com-  
placency. They had often heard of the  
advantages which their father derived from  
his alliance with the canton of Glaris, and  
the services, rendered to a beloved parent  
by free men, inspired them with less aver-  
sion for a free government, than was na-  
tural to persons brought up with the almost  
unconquerable prejudices of fensual pride.

Hitherto it has been our lot to contem-  
plate the ecclesiastical character, in no ad-  
vantageous point of view. Ambition, des-  
potism, and pride usurped the places of  
humility, benevolence, and resignation.  
We feel peculiar pleasure, therefore, in  
introducing to our reader's notice a prelate  
like the abbot of Disentis, who though  
born in an age when tyranny and super-  
stition went hand in hand, was not only  
the friend of civil liberty, but became a  
strenuous promoter of the Rhetian league.

The house of Sax, one of the most an-  
cient and powerful of Rhetia, had taken  
part

CHAP. part with the duke of Milan against the  
XV. confederates ; but, in the present instance,  
the suggestions of prudence triumphed over  
the influence of birth.

A brother of Rudolph of Werdenberg could not behold the struggles of independence with an eye of indifference. The example of his elder brother pointed out to the venerable Hugh the course which he ought to follow, and the benevolence of his character rendered the lesson agreeable. With the soothing voice of friendship he welcomed the petitioners, and promised them his support. Henry of the *white* banner, however, who had essentially contributed to excite the present commotions, turned away from the deputies with a mixed sentiment of anger and disdain. Conscious of the unpopularity of his own government, he felt that their murmurs were directed chiefly against himself, and that to sanction their proceedings was, in fact, to pronounce his own condemnation. But the hour of oppression was passing rapidly away\*.

\* Muller, III. ii.

The far greater number of the adjacent CHAP. barons having approved, or feigned to ap-  
 prove, the proposed system of reform, a  
 meeting was held at Truns, to regulate the  
 new constitution. Many of the nobility  
 were present; among whom particular  
 mention is made of the abbot of Disentis,  
 of the baron of Sax, of Hugh of Werden-  
 berg, and of the three heirs of the house of  
 Razuns. To confer with these illustrious  
 personages, representatives were sent from  
 the neighbouring villages. The assembly  
 was numerous, and the business transacted  
 under the spreading branches of an an-  
 cient lime\*.

The hopes and projects of the whole con-  
 vention being ostensibly directed towards  
 the accomplishment of one object, few  
 difficulties occurred in establishing the fol-  
 lowing regulations, which were solemnly  
 ratified by every member present: "With-  
 out distinction of rank or condition, it is  
 the ardent desire of all who are present,

\* Muller, ib.

either

CHAP. either personally or by representative  
XV. henceforth, to live together in the strictest  
bonds of amity and peace; and to assist  
each other in all difficulties with their advice, their purses, or their lives. It is their wish also to establish a system of commerce upon just and liberal principles, and to provide for the security of the traveller, by maintaining order and regularity within the limits of the republic. From this moment, property of every description is placed under the protection of the law. No one shall invade the rights of his neighbour; but all private disputes shall be decided by a magistrate, appointed for the due administration of justice. All prerogatives, civil or ecclesiastical, shall be preserved inviolate: The contracting parties farther engage never to interfere in the concerns of the abbey of Disentis, but to suffer the election of the abbot to proceed with unbiassed freedom. As disturbances however may arise in the best-constituted communities, should any cases occur, to which the ordinary direction of the law are inapplicable,

cable, the abbot of Disentis shall nominate CHAP.  
XV. three persons; an equal number shall be appointed by the baron of Razuns, and the count of Sax; and the communities of Flims, and of the Rheinwald, shall delegate two each: by whose joint decision the affair shall be finally determined; and, if any opposition be offered to the execution of the decree, it shall be enforced by the united efforts of the whole confederacy. Whenever business of importance demands more than ordinary attention, a general assembly shall be convened at Truns. Beside which, a decennial meeting shall be regularly held for the public renewal of the league, that it may be indelibly imprinted upon the minds of all succeeding generations\*."

It was farther agreed, that "no additional member should be admitted into the bond, without the general consent of the whole." A clause was likewise added that, "no article in this treaty was to interfere

\* Muller, Tschudi.

with



CHAP.  
XV.

with the engagements, which previously subsisted between the abbot and the forest-cantons, or between the count of Sax and the duke of Milan."

The manifold advantages arising from this association, afforded a strong inducement to all the neighbouring people to adopt a similar plan. Hence several confederacies, under different denominations\*, were successively formed amidst the Alpine hills; all constituted upon the same fundamental principles, but varied in those lighter shades, which discriminate character without changing the general resemblance.

\* Such was the league of the *Ten Communities*, and that of the *House of God*.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XVI.

*Council of Bâle—Eugenius IV.—Union of the Greek and Latin Churches—Hussites—View of Manners during the Fifteenth Century.*

IT may be supposed that the transactions of the council of Bâle have no immediate connection with the affairs of Switzerland.\* But independently of the war with the Hussites, in which the confederates took an active part, the proceedings of that assembly are so closely united with those of the former synod, that after the detailed account already given of the transactions of the one, we

CHAP.  
XVI.

\* We continue the subject of ecclesiastical history, that we may not interrupt the chain of events; though, by so doing, we offend against chronological precision.

CHAP. can hardly avoid saying a few words  
 XVI respecting the conduct of the other. Besides, the manners, the opinions, the laws, and even the well being of society were then so intimately blended with the concerns of the church, that it is no easy task to draw a line of separation.

Notwithstanding all the decrees and regulations of the preceding councils, Benedict XIII. persisted in retaining  
 1424. his ideal dignity till the hour of his death : and even then solemnly recommended to the two cardinals, who still adhered to his party, to nominate a successor to the vacant chair. The pillars of the church obeyed, and another phantom arose under the title of Clement VIII. Neither was this shadow of a pope without his partizans ; as Alphonso king of Arragon, from the wish of mortifying the Roman pontiff, against whom he entertained a violent hatred, declared in his favour.\*


Meanwhile, Martin transferred to Sienna the council, which had been originally

\* Mosheim, III. 492.

summoned to meet at Pavia, and thence again removed it to Bâle, where it was directed to assemble at the expiration of seven years. By this artful management, he flattered himself to throw the whole burthen upon his successor; as, according to the common calculation of human chances, it was hardly probable that he himself would be numbered with the living when the appointed period should arrive. In the interval, however, he dexterously contrived to effect a reconciliation with Alphonso; the result of which was, that the degraded Clement was once more reduced to his primitive obscurity.

Whatever may have been his merits as a priest, Martin proved himself an excellent calculator, by dying a few weeks before the meeting of the council. Eugenius IV. his successor,\* entertained the same dread of ecclesiastical congresses, which papal misconduct rendered inseparable from the papal character. But it would

\* Mosheim, ib. 405.

CHAP. have been in the highest degree imprudent  
 XVI.  to disappoint the hopes and expectations of the Christian world, by the sudden dissolution of an assembly, from whose labours so much good was anticipated. Eugenius, therefore, had recourse to artifice; but, after a variety of ineffectual expedients to transfer the synod to an Italian city, he contented himself for the present with sending a legate to watch its proceedings: resolving at the same time instantly to dissolve it, in case the members should presume to encroach upon the prerogatives of the holy see; an event by no means improbable, as the general cry of Europe was in favour of such a reform.\*

Nor was Eugenius deceived. For scarcely had the members entered upon business, when an attack was commenced against the pontifical power, by reviving the dreaded doctrine of the supremacy of a council.† The next step was, to summon the pope to appear before them. But the bitter

\* Muller, III. iii. Mosheim, ib. 422.

† Mosheim, ib.

humiliations

humiliations to which John XXIII. was CHAP. XVI. formerly exposed, had taught his successors to beware of trusting their sacred persons to similar insults. Nothing that could happen to him, while he remained in Italy, could be equally mortifying; he resolved therefore to brave their anger and to disobey. In consequence of this refusal, the assembly was proceeding to depose him; but on the intercession of Sigismund, they consented to grant him a temporary respite, which he prudently employed in attempts to corrupt the leading members.

His apparent moderation was however the mere effect of artifice, and proceeded entirely from the fears which he entertained of the duke of Milan, who having advanced at the head of a considerable force, ravaged all the country in the vicinity of Rome. This roused the indignation of that high-spirited people; and they compelled Eugenius to save himself from their resentment by a precipitate flight.

It would be foreign to our purpose to detail, on one part, the ineffectual efforts

C c 3

made

CHAP. made to correct the morals of the clergy, or  
XVI. on the other, the intrigues and subterfuges employed by that polluted body to elude the attack. The cause of virtue would however, in all probability, have ultimately triumphed, had not an event taken place more favourable to the efforts of corruption, than all the stratagems which Italian cunning, even when refined within the walls of the Vatican, could have devised.

The rapid progress of the Turkish arms having already wrested from the sceptered theologian who swayed the empire of the east, the whole of his dominions except his capital, he was awakened to cares of a more serious nature, than gymnastic exercises, or metaphysical visions. Amidst the distresses which surrounded him, no hope remained, but in a speedy union with the Latin church. In order to discuss this momentous question with greater facility, the Greek emperor offered to attend the council in person, and to bring with him a select number of the most profound disputants that the schools of Constantinople could

could produce: \* a judicious suggestion, CHAP. XVI.  
had it been his wish to impede, instead of  
facilitating the union.

That nothing could be farther from the intention of Eugenius than the accomplishment of this long-projected reconciliation, which it would have been impossible to effect without a mutual renunciation of many incomprehensible and invaluable tenets; yet it afforded him a specious text for transferring the assembly to some town in Italy, which might prove more convenient to the royal divine. Binding however, that the christian prelates were too uncourtly to prefer the accommodation of a sovereign to the good of the church, he immediately issued a bull, dissolving the council of Bale, and summoning another to meet at Ferrara.

But Eugenius had to do with men of 1439.  
untractable tempers, who felt that the cur-

\* Among this number was the learned Bessarion, who was subsequently elevated to the Roman purple. Seduced by the flattering promises of the pope, he exerted all his eloquence to persuade his countrymen to accept the conditions proposed by Eugenius. Mosheim, ib. 425.



CHAP.  
XVI.

rent of public opinion was favourable to their pretensions. Called upon to act under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, they did not hesitate to pursue the line of conduct, which a sense of duty enjoined; and with a zeal, which would have been highly honourable, had it proceeded solely from conscientious motives, they almost unanimously resolved not to abandon their posts, till they had completed the important business for which they had been summoned. In the meanwhile, to prove to the world that they were not to be intimidated, they declared the pope guilty of contumacy, and suspended him from the exercise of all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Eugenius, who was no less desirous of showing that the papal power was independent of all earthly control, published another bull, excommunicating, without distinction, all persons who should adhere to the synod of Bâle.\*

This indecent scene, at a moment when the eyes of Europe were directed with

\* Mosheim, ib. 424.

more

more than common attention toward the CHAP. proceedings of the Latin church, would XVI. have disgusted any people less prone to superstition than the Greeks. But they had been too long accustomed to the virulence of theological controversy to be either astonished or shocked at any enormities which religious dissensions could produce; though they afforded an ample fund of satirical amusement to the Italian wits, and not less scandal to the wise and pious of every nation.

During the heat of the controversy, Sigismund died, leaving behind him a reputation of integrity, sufficient to apologise for many weaknesses. Albert duke of Austria, who married a daughter of the late emperor, and succeeded to the crown of Bohemia in right of his wife, was raised to the vacant throne. Windeck, who had frequent opportunities of making himself acquainted with this prince's character, dwells on his virtues and talents with peculiar satisfaction. Speaking of him after his death, a time when the voice of flattery is no longer heard, he expresses his admiration

CHAP. miration in the following terms: "Since  
 XVI. the first establishment of Christianity, no  
 sovereign was ever more deeply, or more  
 deservedly regretted, by the world. It  
 would be difficult to point out the qua-  
 lities, in which he most excelled. His  
 prudence, his love of justice, his humanity,  
 his activity, and his courage were deserv-  
 ing of our gratitude. Formed to adorn  
 and dignify a throne, he never gave his  
 subjects but one cause of regret; and  
 that arose from the shortness of his  
 reign."\*

1438. . Immediately after his election, the new  
 emperor took the council of Bale under his  
 protection. This, however, was insufficient  
 to produce any alteration on the inflexible  
 temper of Eugenius. He set the powers  
 of the world at defiance, transferred his  
 council from Ferrara to Florence, and ap-  
 peared amidst the fathers of both churches  
 with the air of a conqueror. After dis-  
 playing all the wonders of theological eru-  
 dition, the Greeks were at length prevailed

\* Schmidt, VII. xvii.

upon

upon to receive the opinion of the Latin church with respect to the *procession* of the Holy Spirit,\* and to acknowledge the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. The latter victory was of infinitely greater importance in the eyes of Eugenius, than all the controverted dogmas of the schools. Every thing else now became easy, and the rival Polemics embraced each other, in token of their fraternal reconciliation†.

Unfortunately however for the peace of the contending churches, the miraculous change which had taken place in the minds of their dignitaries, did not equally extend to the vulgar. One of the most material points in dispute was the nature of purgatory. The Greeks insisted, that it was nothing more than a place of darkness and penitence; while the Latins, less humanely, contended for the entire purification of

\* This question had existed a subject of controversy between the two churches for a long series of years. The addition of the word *filioque* (or, *from the son*), to the symbols of Nice and Constantinople was made in the 5th century by the Spanish theologians, and was shortly afterward adopted by those of France. Mosheim. ib. 425.

† Mosheim, ib.

souls

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XVI.

souls by the agency of fire. This question underwent the severest scrutiny; but as no oral testimony could be obtained, it would have probably continued a topic of debate to all succeeding generations, had not a solution been fortunately proposed, which settled the difficulty to the satisfaction of both parties. Persuaded that all attempts at a fuller explanation must fail, they came to a compromise, and contented themselves with declaring that purgatory was a place of purification for departed spirits, but whether the important change was effected through the medium of darkness or of fire, was a question involved in impenetrable mystery. From this decision we may learn, with what facility the most violent disputes may be terminated, provided the contending parties are desirous of an accommodation. The people of Constantinople however were less tractable, and adhered to their ancient prejudices with an obstinacy, which nothing could overcome.

1439. Hitherto the members of the council of Bâle had conducted themselves with consummate prudence; but the success of Eugenius

Eugenius in his rival synod, and the reputation which he had acquired by the union of the Greek and Latin churches, by awakening a spirit of jealousy, embittered all their subsequent measures. Giving way to the violence of resentment, they deposed him, and elected in his stead Amadeus of Savoy; who, wearied with the cares of the world, had abandoned a throne, and retired to a beautiful hermitage at Ripaille, a romantic spot near the lake of Geneva\*.

The reputation of Amadeus was high. Æneas Sylvius, who was secretary to the council, mentions him in the following strain of panegyric: "Amadeus, during a long and glorious reign, fulfilled all the duties of an excellent prince. He was the protector of the widow, and the orphan.—By his prudent regulations order and tranquillity were restored in every part of his dominions, where robberies, rapes, and murders had formerly been committed with impunity. Justice also was impartially administered to all ranks and conditions of

\* Mosheim ib. 427.

men

CHAP. men. When engaged in wars, it was rather  
 XV. by acts of benevolence, than by force of  
 arms, that he sought to subdue the enemy. But wearied at length with worldly grandours, he retired to Ripaille, in order to dedicate the remnant of his days to the service of God. In that peaceful retreat, his dress consisted of the rudest materials, and was merely sufficient to defend his body against the severity of the winter.—His meals were simple, sparing, and uniform. Such likewise was the discipline and the devotion observed in the monastery, which he founded, that a more exemplary and pious establishment could no where be found\*

Europe however was so completely disgusted with the schisms, which had prevailed so long in the church, that all the virtues of the royal hermit, who assumed the name of Felix, were beheld with indifference.—Without detaching themselves from the council of Bale, the far greater part of the christian powers remained unshaken in their

\* Schmidt Geschichte der Deutschen, VII. xvii.

obedience to the Roman pontiff; so that Felix, after supporting his equivocal honours for the space of eight years, thought it prudent to take a final leave of all terrestrial greatness, and withdrew once more to his beloved retreat\*.

CHAP.  
XVI  
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It is not our intention to minutely describe the various regulations adopted with a view to amend the discipline of the church; but there is one event, which merits some attention, on account of its singularity. After the base and inhuman treatment, which Huss had experienced from the council of Constance, it could hardly be expected that any of his followers should trust themselves in the power of an ecclesiastical synod. Yet strange as it may seem, it is equally true that Procopius, the successor of Zisca, appeared at Bâle during the sitting of the council. But he came attended by so formidable a suite, that he had no personal danger to apprehend, though he was himself an object of terror to all who

\* According to Mosheim, Nicolas, who succeeded Eugenius, was distinguished for erudition and genius, and was a liberal patron of the arts. Ib.

were



CHAP. were concerned in that disgraceful transac-  
XVI. tion. This step however gratifying as it  
might be to the vanity of Procopius, proved  
fatal to the cause which he espoused. De-  
puties were sent into Bohemia, under co-  
lour of continuing the negociation, but who  
were secretly entrusted with a mission of a  
very different nature. Convinced by fatal  
experience that the Hussites while actuated  
by one common interest, were invincible,  
they omitted no means of corruption, which  
seemed likely to divide them. Neither was  
the task so difficult as it might appear;  
since the majority of the nobles began al-  
ready to question the validity of a doctrine,  
which inculcated tenets by no means favour-  
1434. able to their own pretensions. No sooner  
had the catholic missionaries succeeded in  
disseminating dissension and jealousy  
among the chiefs of the Hussites, than the  
army attacked them unawares, and gained  
a complete victory, in which Procopius fell.  
Their triumph, however, was irreparably  
tarnished by every act of cruelty, which  
the savage refinements of persecuting zeal  
can inflict.

Nothing

Nothing more of importance occurred during the continuance of the council. If

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we consider the duration of this assembly, we are surprised to find that so little should have been done; but when, on the other hand, we reflect upon the temper of the times, we may fairly decide that full as much was accomplished, as the prejudices of the age would allow. To promote any essential reform, in matters so delicate as those of religion, requires wisdom, moderation, and a spirit of philosophy, far more enlightened than that which prevailed at this early period; when the governments of Europe were just emerging from a state of barbarism, and the people were every where degraded by the most abject superstition. Even the more enlightened class of ecclesiastics, who were loudest in their declamations against the tyranny and corruption of Rome, were more frequently occupied in low cabals for the preservation of their own benefices, than in well digested schemes for the establishment of order, the correction of abuses, or the propagation of truth.

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CHAP.

XVI.



Wes hall now change our subject for a while, to examine the state of Society. This task has hitherto been agreeable, as it must ever afford the sincerest pleasure to contemplate the human character untainted by the seductions of polished life, unhardened by the speculations of commerce, and uncorrupted by the intrigues of government. It is true, there is no artificial glow of colouring, no studied disposition of light and shade, to dazzle and deceive. The portrait appears in the rude dress of nature, with all her strong and characteristic passions. At the first glance, one predominant feature arrests our attention: it is the love of liberty; a sentiment, perhaps of all others, the most productive of heroic actions, since neither the temptations of interest, the seductions of grandeur, nor the menaces of despotism can divert the true patriot from the settled purpose of his mind.

From a spark, which kindled in the field of Ruti, we have traced the flame as it gradually diffused itself over the far greater part of Helvetia. For though the league was still confined to the eight original cantons,

which constituted what is generally termed CHAP.  
XVI. the ANCIENT BOND, there was scarcely a town of consequence in Switzerland that had not felt the generous glow in it's bosom. The accession of five other cantons (for Appenzel was yet regarded only in the light of an ally) gave additional splendour to the Helvetic union: but a spirit of jealousy had already penetrated into the heart of the confederacy, and was destroying the vitals of the constitution; while to a casual observer the body politic seemed daily acquiring additional vigour and activity.

UNION is the true source of prosperity to every nation; but to none is it so essential as to a country composed, like Switzerland, of separate commonwealths, whose objects and pursuits were widely different, and whose manners and constitutions were by no means the same. So long as the weakness of the Helvetic republics exposed them to the assaults of Austrian ambition, they were connected by the love of independence; but when the wild projects of Frederic had attracted the resentment of

D d 2

Sigismund,

CHAP.

XV

Sigismund, and with it the censures of the church, the conquests then made by the confederates gave such a consistency to their government, that the house of Austria ceased to be an object of terror. From that moment the charm, by which they had been thitherto connected, was dissolved. Discordant interests, and dishonourable views, usurped the place of zeal for the public welfare; while the natural turbulence of the Helvetic character broke forth in domestic dissensions. The haughty virtue of Schweitz was ill calculated to bear the affected superiority of Zurich; and the continual collision, of these two powerful cantons finally produced an explosion, which menaced the whole league with destruction.

M. de Montesquieu has laid it down as an invariable principle, that *virtue* is the only basis of a *republican* government. The position is in theory most admirable. Yet were it established by practical experiment, we can discover no valid reason for confining it to republics alone; but would willingly extend it's influence to

every form of human polity. That ingenious writer has indeed thought proper, from the love of methodical arrangement, to class *despotism* among the different species of governments; but it is, in fact, no government at all: it is an abuse of government, and is with respect to *monarchy*, exactly what *anarchy* is with regard to *freedom*.

It may, perhaps, appear presumptuous to differ from an author of such established celebrity; yet it is scarcely possible seriously to investigate his opinions, without perceiving that in many parts his system, however captivating, is neither sanctioned by experience nor consistent with the order of things. We have only to examine the different republics, which have flourished since the days of Solon and Lycurgus, to find that whatever may have been the principles upon which they acted in the precarious period of infancy, with their weakness they threw aside their virtue, invading the rights of other people, and neglecting their own, with a degree of profligacy never exceeded by any nation under

CHAP. der the most arbitrary monarch, or in the  
 XVI. most corrupt state of society.

Notwithstanding the proud parade of stoic virtue, Rome from it's very origin was the avowed enemy of human repose. The god, which her citizens served, was interest. Whatever was great and noble, beyond the limits of the empire, excited their jealousy, and was devoted to destruction for no other reason, than because it was noble and great. Conformably to this atrocious system, they annihilated the poor remains of Grecian liberty, dethroned the monarchs of Lower Asia, and betrayed and ruined Carthage. The injustice and ingratitude of the Athenians are features not less striking in their national character, than the inconstancy of their disposition and the brilliancy of their wit. Not even the rude integrity of Sparta could withstand the seductions of success!

If ever a republic was erected upon the solid basis of virtue, it was unquestionably that of Helvetia. The more nearly we investigate the motives and the measures, of it's founders,

founders, the more strongly will this opinion be confirmed. In vain we search for the feuds of ambition, or the wars of interest.— Yet in the course of a century and an half, prosperity had infected her two leading states with all those vices and passions, which are the inseparable companions of wealth and commerce. The advantage of the public began to be sacrificed to that of the individual. Amidst the violence of domestic quarrels, the grand principle of the federation was forgotten, and an unnatural union was formed with the hereditary enemy of Helvetic independence.

Hence her destiny appears to us a satisfactory proof that virtue, considered as the fundamental principle of government, is the mere phantom of an enthusiastic fancy, vainly sought in an aggregate body, composed of such vitiated beings as men. From melancholy experience indeed we learn, that probity and magnanimity are seldom found in exalted posts. In a private station, we may repose securely upon the bed of innocence; but from the moment we embark upon the perilous ocean of

D d 4

public



CHAP. public life, the virtue of the most virtuous  
 XVI. is in danger.

It may be demanded then, with some appearance of reason, in what consists the difference so visible in the characters of different people, and even of the same people under a different form of government? The answer is obvious. It consists in the feelings of the heart. In that noble sentiment of independence, which informs the lowest citizen of a free state, that he is a MAN, and has therefore an equal claim with the proudest of his countrymen to the protection of her laws. Deprive him of this, and his whole nature alters. It matters little, by what means the change is produced; whether by the hand of power, or by the pressure of poverty and distress.

Examples of this kind may escape the common observer; but to the philosopher; who closely examines the motives of human conduct, they present themselves in all the strong and melancholy features of truth. Behold the man, whose arm is sufficient to procure him every necessary of life!

life! With what an elevated countenance CHAP.  
XVI he gazes around him! The smile of content sits light upon his brow. That smile denotes the feelings of a heart, which can reply with fearless dignity to the mightiest of mankind, **I AM LIKE YOURSELF—A MAN.** Let us now reverse the picture, and reduce the same person to a precarious dependence on the bounty of others. He will no longer be recognisable. Not a feature, not an action, not a word will be the same. The open countenance of conscious honesty has disappeared, and in it's stead is seen the sullen expression of servility and despair!

It is not the issue of a battle, or the result of a congress, which exclusively interests an enlightened mind. Amidst the pomp of military triumphs, and the chicanery of successful diplomacy, the imagination is dazzled and the judgment misled. But before we can determine with confidence the real state of a nation, we must visit the cottage of the peasant. If we behold him rise from his homely repast with a cheerful countenance, if we see him gaze with

CHAP. with delight upon a numerous and healthy  
XVI. offspring, we may then venture to pronounce it's government good, and it's subjects happy. But if after a day of toil he is unable to satisfy the cravings of nature, if in silent despair he looks down on his children crying to him in vain for bread, or tears himself from their innocent caresses, unable to support the excruciating scene; the condition of that society, although it's rulers may have subjugated the world by their arms, or rendered it tributary to their commerce, is a real object of compassion.

By their recent acquisitions, the Helvetic states gained such additional strength, that they had little to fear from the neighbouring powers. The reputation, so nobly earned in the field of battle, was a barrier still more formidable even than those which nature supplied in the Alps. Besides, the principle of union, in which their real strength consisted, had progressively acquired both consistency and force. The rude inhabitants of the forest-cantons continued still the fathers and protectors of the confederacy.

racy. For though both Berne and Zurich CHAP. surpassed them in wealth and population, XVI. they were far inferior to them in those exalted qualities, which constitute true patriotism. In those great commercial cities, the love of gain had already divided the plodding mind of speculation with the love of liberty: but the true spirit of independence still existed, in all its purity, amidst the vallies of Uri, of Schweitz, and of Unterwalden. The simple manners of that unsophisticated people were strongly contrasted, in the popular assemblies at Constance, with the effeminacy and duplicity of the Italians, who though deeply versed in the refinements, were totally unacquainted with the virtues of their Augustan ancestry. What a source of reflection for a contemplative mind! What a lesson for the statesman, and the philosopher!

If we examine the situation of the lower classes, the internal economy of a Swiss cottage will present us with a perfect model of domestic felicity. Engaged in the pursuits of agriculture, or occupied with the education of their children, the happy pair, when

CHAP. when the labours of the day were concluded, <sup>XVI.</sup> met each other with the smile of satisfaction. Addicted to the pleasures of rustic life, and inclined to hospitable conviviality, they spent the holiday among their friends and relations in festive amusements. The old delighted themselves with music, the young with dancing. They sung their heroes, and their God; nor was the muse neglectful of the softer passion. Their pastimes were suited to a nation of soldiers, being calculated to give health and activity to the body, while they imparted strength and energy to the mind.

Gaming is a passion of such universal prevalence, even among the most savage nations, that we must not be surprised to meet with it in the romantic vallies of Switzerland. But we should have expected to find chastity regarded as one of the most essential ornaments of the female character. Yet strange as it may sound, there are few countries in modern Europe, where the licentiousness of the women is carried to greater excess. We must not however suppose that, among the rude natives of the

the Alps, gallantry was decorated with all those refinements, under which it artfully endeavours in polished nations to palliate its deformity. When a man became the reputed father of children, which he had reason to believe were not his own, or when an erring daughter returned to the paternal roof with an offspring unsanctioned by law, the husband or the parent exclaimed, *Es ist Gottes wille !\** This indeed is a species of philosophy, for which we should have rather looked in the meridian of a court, than among the hardy sons of Helvetia.

The habits of the higher orders differed little from those, which we have already described. To attend the celebration of mass was the first occupation of the morning. The remainder of the day was dedicated to hunting, or to martial sports. In the evening they assembled in the ball-room, or over the bowl. It has ever been a custom, among the nations of the north, to pass much of their time at table. The na-

\* "It is the will of God."

tural

CHAP. XVI. tural reserve and austerity of the German character were thrown aside, while the heart expanded, amidst the charms of conviviality, in confidence mutual and unreserved.

But the grand business of their lives was war. The attainment of superior skill in military exercises was the chief object of their education, and the *tournament*\* their school of honour. Strange would it sound in modern times, to hear it enumerated among the brightest qualities of an accomplished prince, "that he had spent his time in wandering from province to province,

\* Tournaments are usually attributed to the martial genius of the eleventh century; but though they were then reduced to a more regular form, and celebrated with greater magnificence, their origin is of much earlier date. The principal object of this institution was to keep alive a military spirit in time of peace, and to train the young nobility to arms, by accustoming them to the manœuvres which were employed in the field of battle. In these mock encounters, an opportunity was afforded to experienced generals to appreciate the talents of the rising generation, and by practising fresh evolutions, to prepare for the renewal of hostilities.

St. Palaye sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie, I. iii.

fighting

fighting in every town through which he passed." Yet such is the eulogium bestowed upon Henry of Luxembourg and his brother Baldwin by an historian, who seriously intended to write their panegyric.\*

Æneas Sylvius, speaking of Albert of Brandenburg, surnamed Achilles, says, "that he bore away the prize in seventy tournaments." Much has been written in praise of an institution, which was supposed to elevate the mind to glory.† But

\* Schmidt. VII. xxxvii.

† Military enterprises of every description, and particularly those which were destined for the conquest of the Holy Land, were announced with a degree of splendor peculiarly calculated to animate the spectators with an ardent passion for glory. With an enthusiasm unknown to modern times, the warrior devoted his life to the service of God and his country; an engagement sanctified by the united powers of religion, of honour, and of love. Nothing was more common, than to behold rival knights encouraging each other, by a noble emulation, to deeds of heroism. In the heat of battle they contended, who first should plant his standard on the hostile turrets, or snatch the banner of the enemy from its slaughtered bearer. In a word, the object of every soldier was personal distinction, and courage never failed to attain its object.

Sainte Palaye, ib.

to



CHAP. to us it appears that this celebrated diver-  
XVI. sion, so much admired throughout Europe  
in the days of gallantry and romance, was  
evidently borrowed from the most savage of  
all spectacles ever invented for the recrea-  
tion of a civilised people. Among the  
Romans indeed persons of rank remained  
tranquil spectators of the bloody scene,  
and enjoyed at their ease the graceful ag-  
onies of an expiring slave, till imperial folly  
aspired to the disgraceful honour of mur-  
dering with dexterity before a people base  
enough to applaud the profligate act. But  
the inhabitants of the north, desirous of im-  
proving upon the entertainments of Rome,  
considered the profession of a gladiator as  
no degradation to illustrious birth. Actu-  
ated by a romantic phrensy, they ran about  
the world for the express purpose of fight-  
ing men whom they had never seen, and  
with whom they could consequently have  
no personal quarrel.

Neither was the amusement less dange-  
rous, than it was savage. There was scarcely  
a family, indeed, which had not to mourn  
some near relation, the victim of this fero-  
cious

cious sport\*. Yet, such was its captiva-  
 tion, that no public festival was regarded  
 as perfect, unless accompanied by a tour-  
 nament. In vain did the pope, as univer-  
 sal father of the christian world, declare  
 this perilous institution repugnant to the  
 precepts of the gospel. Prejudice and  
 passion got the better of religion; and,  
 great as was the deference of mankind to  
 the holy see, their attachment to folly and  
 fashion was still more prevalent. In spite  
 of councils and decretals, the highest dig-  
 nitaries of the church were frequently pre-  
 sent at the celebration of these forbidden  
 spectacles, and were sometimes even known  
 to exchange the mitre for the helmet, and  
 to enter the lists amidst the combatants.

The knights of Suabia, and Lower Ger-  
 many, yielded to none in martial exercises.  
 Such indeed was their reputation, that ad-  
 venturers flocked from every quarter, to  
 contend with them for the palm of honour.

\* The memory of the reader will furnish him with nu-  
 merous instances of this kind. We shall, therefore, con-  
 tent ourselves with recalling to his recollection the prema-  
 ture death of Henry II. of France.

CHAP. A memorable combat of this nature is frequently mentioned by the Swiss historians.

XVI.

During one of these chivalrous excursions Don Juan of Merlo, a Spanish noble, arrived at Bale, where he instantly published a declaration, announcing the object of his journey. Allured by the love of fame, he had broken a hundred lances in the different countries of Europe, without having yet encountered a conqueror. Henry of Ranstein no sooner read the proud defiance, than inflamed with indignation at the arrogance of the stranger, he grew eager to vindicate the insulted honour of his country. Without hesitation he threw down the gage, leaving to Merlo the choice of weapons. The day was fixed. The judges were appointed. The high reputation of the rival knights attracted crowds of spectators from the adjacent provinces, and so great was the influx of foreigners, that the magistrates became apprehensive for the safety of the city. A strong detachment of troops was posted at the only gate, through which they were permitted to pass. Horsemen patrolled the streets, while twenty armed

armed vessels, stationed on the river, CHAP. XVI.  
commanded the principal avenues of the town. The lists were held in the great square. The judges led the way, and took their seats. Clad in complete armour the senate followed, preceded by the banner of the state; while the procession was closed by a long train of knights and ladies, from Germany, Italy, and France\*.

The appointed signal being given, the combat began. With equal fury the knights assailed each other. With equal address they long warded off each other's blows. But fortune at length decided in favour of the Spaniard, though the German writers pretend, that the prize was adjudged to him from motives of courtesy alone. Such a sacrifice of pride to politeness could hardly have been expected in France, but in Germany it is altogether incredible.

While men were thus entirely engrossed in pursuit of military fame, the progress of refinement and luxury was hardly perceptible, when compared with the habits of

\* Schmidt, VII. xxxvii.

CHAP. society either in France or Italy. By all  
 XVI. foreign writers, the Swiss and Germans are  
 treated as a people just emerging from barbarism. The barons' castles continued still to be the receptacles of plunder\*. Though by changing the name, with a view to disguise the crime (a practice, not uncommon in modern times), what would have been called 'theft' in a peasant, was termed 'reiterey†' in a baron; and 'to live from the saddle,' was a genteel expression for a noble robber\*. To 'steal' has ever been held ignominious, as it requires none of those daring exertions, which by their dangers and difficulties dazzle the imagination. It is therefore seldom practised, except by persons of mean rank, and of profligate morals. But to 'plunder' upon

\* This may appear to be a contradiction of what was said in a former chapter. But the reader must recollect, that we were then speaking *exclusively* of republican Helvetia, throughout which society was established upon a far better footing.

† The word *reiterey*, in the German language, signifies the business of a horseman or a knight.

‡ Schmidt, VII. xxxvii.

a more

a more extensive scale is the exclusive <sup>CHAP.</sup> privilege of heroism, and has ever been <sup>XVL</sup> exercised by men of the most distinguished extraction. Yet the only difference consists in the quantity of the thing which is stolen. The robber of a purse is a thief: the robber of a province becomes a hero.

It must not be inferred, from this general censure, that the conduct of the whole body of the nobles were equally flagitious. There were many whose virtues did honour to their names. Their swords were the guardians of innocence, their mansions were the dwellings of hospitality; but, in general, the profession of a baron was at the best a precarious profession\*. Several of that class imagined that the possession of a castle gave the proprietor a claim to all the land which he could acquire by fraud, by treaty, or by force. The following anecdote is related of an archbishop of Cologne, who had erected one of these robber-

\* In the Venetian state the word *barone* is, to this day, made use of to signify a 'scoundrel.'

E e 3

fortresses.

CHAP. fortresses. The person, to whom he had  
 XVI, entrusted the command, inquiring the  
 amount of his salary, the prelate led him  
 to a window, and pointed significantly to  
 four roads within view of the castle,—mean-  
 ing thus to intimate, that whatever passed  
 was a fair object of depredation\*.

This martial spirit found its way even  
 into the great commercial towns, and  
 blended itself with the municipal duties of  
 ordinary life : so that a horse, and a suit of  
 armour, were considered as necessary ap-  
 pendages to the station of a free burgess,  
 Even the lower classes of mechanics had  
 their arms in constant readiness, and were  
 prepared to sally forth, whenever they were  
 summoned by the alarm of the bell.

In proportion as trade increased, the love  
 of arms declined. The intercourse, which  
 was gradually extending between distant  
 nations, enlarged the understanding, re-  
 fined the manners, and expanded the views  
 of mankind. How far the national cha-  
 racter was ameliorated by the change, or

\* Schmidt, VII. xxxvii.

whether

whether in softening and polishing its ruder parts many solid virtues were not rubbed away, is a question for the moralist to discuss. Hospitality and good faith, however, remained still the distinguishing characteristics both of the Germans and the Swiss. Stephen duke of Bavaria, being on a visit to Galeazzo Visconti at Milan, the latter was continually boasting of his treasures, and of the great extent of his power. Stephen, for some days, listened with attention ; but being at length wearied with the constant recurrence of the same topic, he could not refrain from making the following remark : “ Your situation, “ cousin, appears to me to be rather brilliant than enviable. It is true, that on “ our side the Alps we are possessed of “ less wealth, and of less authority. But “ then we enjoy a blessing, to which you “ are a stranger, and of which those who “ have tried it, know the value : WE SLEEP “ SECURE IN THE BOSOM OF LOYALTY.” Galeazzo was struck with the observation, for he had never before reflected upon the dangers, to which arbitrary power is exposed,



CHAP. posed. The event, however, proved that  
 XVI. Stephen's was the safer policy, as Galeazzo  
 soon afterward perished by the poignard  
 of an assassin\*.

Events of this nature are common in arbitrary governments. Yet the annals of Germany scarcely afford an instance, Albert I. excepted, of any sovereign who fell by the hand of a subject. That this was entirely owing to the virtue and equitable administration of the reigning princes, it is by no means easy to believe: we must seek it's cause then in some other principle, and may possibly trace it to the integrity of hearts, which as yet were strangers to all the refinements of modern philosophy, and had been taught to consider a sovereign as the representative of heaven. Men thus educated are proof against the severest of all trials, OPPRESSION. As a balance to these virtues, both the Swiss and the Germans are accused of superstition, and of inebriety. The former may, in a great degree, be attributed to

\* Schmidt, VII. xxxvii.

that

that easy credulity, which is the child of conscious honesty. He, who is above deceiving others, is unwilling to believe that he has himself been deceived. The latter frequently arises from an erroneous idea of hospitality. But the want of rational conversation, and more refined pleasures, had also its share. So far from allowing drunkenness to be criminal, the Germans insisted that wherever it prevailed, the people were open-hearted, friendly, faithful to their engagements, constant in their attachments, of manly feelings, and of intrepid courage; while in those countries, where the use of strong liquors was less frequent, every low and unnatural vice prevailed, and treachery, dissimulation, cowardice, and hypocrisy formed the national character. That the picture was sketched with some degree of correctness, we shall not attempt to deny; but the inferences, which were drawn from it, are by no means equally clear.

Strangers as the Germans then were to the refinements of polished society, instances are not wanting to show, that they frequently

CHAP.  
XVI.

CHAP. frequently carried the love of ostentation to  
XVI. an extravagant excess. Of this the wedding of George, duke of Bavaria-Lanshut, with Hedwige princess of Poland, affords a striking example, which is described by contemporary writers with the minutest accuracy. Albert of Brandenburg, and his bride, were accompanied by a hundred ladies of the first distinction; fourteen of whom attended the litter on horseback richly habited, and wearing white plumes fastened to their hats with clasps of diamonds. The emperor Ferdinand, and his son, had a retinue of six thousand horse. Hedwige walked between the emperor and duke Ótho, the former of whom was attired in a magnificent robe of crimson and gold. His mantle was richly embroidered with pearls interspersed with precious stones. On his breast, he wore a large cross, composed of the choicest brilliants and other costly jewels. Hedwige's dress consisted of a short petticoat of brown silk, encircled with a deep fringe of pearls. Her veil was of corresponding beauty. Round her waist  
was

was fastened a girdle of the finest pearls, CHAP. XVI.  
 intermixed with precious stones. The   
 bridegroom was habited in a robe of red  
 taffety, covered with a rich embroidery of  
 precious stones. His mantle was short,  
 according to the fashion of the times, and  
 equalled the tunic in splendor. A magni-  
 ficent collar of jewels blazed round his  
 neck. His crown was of massive gold.  
 His hair was confined by a band of pearls  
 of extraordinary size and transparency.  
 From his crown hung a narrow veil, which  
 reached no lower than the eye-brow, and  
 was edged with a fringe of gold. The  
 other princes were clad in the richest at-  
 tire, and vied with each other in magnifi-  
 cence\*.

At a diet held at Frankfort in 1397, Leo-  
 pold duke of Austria is said to have en-  
 tertained four thousand horse at his own  
 cost†. So great indeed were the retinues,  
 which attended persons of distinction, that  
 it frequently became a matter of extreme  
 difficulty to provide for their entertain-  
 ment.

\* Schmidt, VII. xxxvii.

† Id. ib.

Though

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Though armour appears to have been usually worn by the nobility, yet if we give credit to the ancient chroniclers, the fashions were nearly as variable, and certainly far more expensive, than those of the present age. Nor was the imitation of foreign modes less servile. It was no uncommon thing for persons to change their dress three or four times in the course of a day, and to appear successively in the habits of different nations; a custom which certainly afforded considerable latitude for the display of taste, and for the waste of money \* ! Neither was this species of luxury confined to the reigning families alone, but prevailed universally among the higher classes of society. Previous to the celebration of a splendid tournament at Heilbron, toward the close of the fifteenth century, a decree was issued, prohibiting the ladies from having more than four gaudes. Of these none were to be made of cloth of gold, nor worked with pearls or precious stones. The beauty, who trans-

\* Id. ib.

gressed

gressed, was excluded from the honour of CHAP.  
XVI.  
distributing the prizes, and from opening  
the balls. A severe penalty upon female  
vanity \* !

It is a singular fact, that the dreadful plague (mentioned in a former chapter) which desolated Europe during the fourteenth century, produced a beneficial change in the domestic economy of life, and tended materially to improve its comforts. Before that time, cleanliness was almost unknown. The vanity of mankind has, in all ages, given them a taste for finery ; but neatness is the growth of civilisation, and was as much a stranger among our unpolished ancestors, as many of those social duties, which are essential to the intercourse of refined society, and which, on that account, claim a distinguished rank among the minor virtues. This alteration contributed not a little to prevent the returns of those destructive epidemics, which had before so frequently depopulated Europe. The houses were more commodiously

\* Schmidt, *ibid.*

built.

CHAP. built. The streets were broader and cleaner,  
 XVI. and the circulation of air became in conse-  
 1423. quence more free and rapid; while all  
 those little elegances which constitute the  
 charm and ornament of life, began imper-  
 ceptibly to be studied with greater avidity.

Speaking of the wealth and conveniences  
 which he had witnessed in many towns  
 of Germany, Æneas Sylvius emphatically  
 says, "that a king of Scotland might  
 think himself happy, did he enjoy half the  
 comforts of a burgher of Nuremberg\*." In  
 the same stile of eulogium, he adds, "There  
 is scarcely an inn, where you do not drink  
 out of silver goblets; nor is there a trades-  
 man's wife, who is not profusely decorated  
 with ornaments of gold. In what words,"  
 continues he, "can I describe the magni-  
 ficence of the bridles; the profusion of  
 jewels employed in rings and girdles, and  
 in beautifying the shields, the spurs, and  
 the helmets of the knights? But what are  
 these to the pomp and splendor of their

\* Schmidt, VII. xxxviii.

altars,

altars\*, where numerous relics are displayed enchased with gold †?" To a modern reader, this description will probably appear a little exaggerated; but before we give way to scepticism, we must remember that the author of it was an Italian, and accustomed to all the pomp and riches of that flourishing country. Neither must we forget, that it relates exclusively to the great trading towns. Were we indeed to judge of the situation of those cities, in the fifteenth century, from their present state of wretchedness, our inference would prove erroneous in the extreme. The whole commerce of the east at that time centered in Venice, and was thence conveyed through Switzerland and Germany to the northern extremities of Europe, dispensing wealth

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XVI.

\* Æn. Syl. de Mor. Germ.

† To render this profusion of treasure credible, we must recollect that several mines of silver and gold were discovered about this period, which occasioned such a currency of the precious metals throughout Europe, that they were employed for the most common uses. Some idea may be formed of their abundance, from an anecdote related of Albert duke of Austria, who is said to have dined at Sneeberg upon a silver table, which weighed four hundred pounds.

and



CHAP. and prosperity in it's passage. But ostenta-  
 XVI. tion and luxury were equally unknown  
 to those gallant mountaineers, whose ac-  
 tions we have recorded with delight, and  
 whose chief riches consisted in their igno-  
 rance of gold.

The increase of population kept pace with that of commerce. The accounts, indeed, given by authentic historians of the number of inhabitants in various cities of Germany, seem almost incredible to us, who have beheld them only in their melancholy decay. Strasburg (though till lately a flourishing town, and consequently an exception to the foregoing remark) so early as the year 1392 was not only fortified with stately towers and lofty walls, but is said to have contained twenty thousand well armed citizens, who were ready to take the field on the shortest notice. The population of Nuremberg is estimated by Conrad Celtes at fifty-two thousand. Alas! how miserably has that population declined! \*

\* Schmidt, ib.

That

That any kind of commercial intercourse CHAP.  
 should have subsisted at a time when tra- XVI.  
 vellers were exposed to so many perils,  
 and subjected to every species of extor-  
 tion, appears matter of wonder to us, who  
 are accustomed to a very different state  
 of society. The profession of a merchant  
 was indeed in many respects a warlike  
 profession: by force of arms he was obliged  
 to protect the transport of his wares against  
 the depredations of men, who thought it  
 degrading to noble birth to acquire wealth  
 by honourable industry, but who regarded  
 it as no degradation to plunder the labo-  
 rious artisan of wealth so acquired. The  
 prerogatives of birth however had so far  
 yielded to the suggestions of reason, that  
 they no longer screened the titled robber  
 from the punishment due to his crimes.  
 The iron cage, in which the citizens of  
 Quidlinberg immured a noble marauder  
 of this description, was long preserved as  
 a mark of seasonable severity, and exhibit-  
 ed as such to the curious.\*

\* Schmidt, ib.

CHAP. The manufactures of Germany and  
 XVI. Switzerland were in high repute, and the rapid progress, which both countries had made in the various arts of refinement, afforded a sure prognostic of their future success. Prior to the brilliant age of Leo X. many of the best artists employed in Italy and France were Swiss or Germans, who had migrated from their native country in search of superior emoluments.

The discovery of printing\* is alone sufficient to reflect eternal honour upon the nation, which gave birth to an invention so highly beneficial to the propagation of truth. The difficulty and expence of pro-

\* This ingenious and useful art was discovered, about the year 1440, by Lawrence Coster of Haarlem, though some other towns dispute the honour of the invention. But from the accurate treatise of M. Meersman of Rotterdam, it appears clearly that Coster was the original inventor of *wooden types*. Guttemberg of Mentz improved upon the hint by *carving types in metal*; which, though superior to the former, were still imperfect. But it was reserved for Schoeffer, of Strasburgh, to bring the art to greater maturity, by introducing the method of *casting types in an iron mould*. Maittaire, *Annales Typograph.*

curing

curing books had previously obstructed CHAP.  
XVI:  
the general diffusion of knowledge; but from this time a scene of unexpected information was opened to the inquisitive genius of man. In earlier times the greatest princes, though they spared neither money nor pains, could seldom succeed in forming a valuable library. Lewis, elector Palatine, in the year 1491 bequeathed to the university of Heidelberg his celebrated collection, which he had purchased at an enormous expense. It consisted of one hundred and fifty-two manuscripts; eighty-nine of which treated of theological subjects; seven of civil law, five of municipal rights, forty-five of medicine, and the remaining six of astronomy and philosophy.\*

By a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, the discovery of printing took place at the precise period when a taste for letters began to reappear, and undoubtedly contributed most effectually to its revival. The Latin classics once more became objects of admiration and study,

\*Schmidt, ib.\*

CHAP. The Greeks also (who, about this time,  
 XVI. frequented Italy in considerable numbers)  
 introduced a passion for the beauties of Grecian literature. The northern nations, indeed, were backward in receiving the new lights. An adequate idea of the relative improvement of the human mind, on the opposite sides of the Alps, may be formed from the earliest productions of the press in both countries. The Germans began with the Psalms, which were printed in 1457;\* and after publishing the Bible with laudable zeal, proceeded to the propagation of dulness, in all its various branches of theology, and cannon-law. While from the Italian press, the rays of classic learning beamed on the astonished world. Thus, with the exception of the two first works, which deservedly merited a preference, every thing printed by the German editors contributed rather to impede than to assist the progress of reason; while the Italians dived at once into the depths of science, and gave to the public whatever

\* Maittaire, &c.

was most deserving admiration among the CHAP. precious stores of antiquity. XVI.

It is evident, however, that this deficiency of taste did not arise from the deficiency of universities; for places of education abounded in every part of Germany. Rudolph Agricola was the first writer who aimed at improving the national style, by introducing a taste for ancient literature. His system was subversive of the reign of dulness, and consequently inimical to the views and principles of the German theologians; who, unable to controvert opinions founded on the immutable basis of reason, affected to consider them as unworthy of the notice of scholars so profoundly learned as themselves.\*

Yet in spite of all the efforts of dignified pedantry, a taste for the *belles lettres* insensibly spread. The study of Greek and Roman literature became fashionable every where except in the universities. The professors however still persevered, with

\* Schmidt, lb.

CHAP. insurmountable obstinacy, in adhering to  
XVI.

established rules, and consoled themselves by their enrolments for their unpopularity. Reputation and genius were evidently on the side of their opponents, but wealth and dignities belonged exclusively to themselves; and though their vanity might occasionally suffer from the comparison, upon the whole they were not dissatisfied with the partition. They stigmatised the admirers of classic learning with the appellation of innovators and heretics; the latter retorted sarcasms on the stupidity and the prejudices of the old school. In this dispute, both parties were so occupied, that they neglected to cultivate their mother-tongue. Hence the German language grew into disrepute, and was scarcely ever employed by any writer of eminence.

Even the minstrel and the harper, who had formerly contributed to the delight of every feast, were now banished from the habitations of the great; and the melancholy void occasioned by their absence was supplied by the fool and the buffoon.

In the days of chivalry, when knights and  
paladins

paladins wandered over the world in search of adventures; the most wonderful relations of prowess portrayed in the animated colours of poetry, were received with avidity and applause; but, with the decline of knighthood, the passion for historical ballads gradually subsided. The muse was now constrained to assume a different theme. The sports of Bacchus and Venus succeeded to the din of war; while songs of love and jollity amused the vulgar, and procured a dinner for the hungry bard.\*

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Meanwhile the fool was rising to eminence, and by his vocation shortly became so much in vogue, that it was found necessary to limit the number of *professional fools*.† This description of jesters were of both sexes. Exclusively of those who enjoyed the honourable appellation of ‘court-fools,’ there existed a set of itinerant fools, who strolled from province to province diverting the populace, and receiving a trifling recompense for their

\* Schmidt, ib.

† Id. ib.



CHAP. XVI. degrading office,\* This, however, proved only the fashion of a day. The fool sunk in estimation, as the poet had done before. But no sooner was this comic personage excluded from the banquets of the great, than hilarity wholly disappeared. Dull and ostentatious solemnity succeeded to the lively quibbles of familiar wit. Whether or not the change was productive of any advantages in the habits of social life, we must leave to the determination of those, who are acquainted with the state of society in most of the German courts; where forms and etiquette seem to have undergone no material alteration since the period to which we allude.

The re-union of the hierarchy, under one common head, was effected by the council of Constance. But even previously to that epoch, Helvetia was too deeply engaged in the pursuits of ambition, to take an active part in those violent alterations, which distracted the rest of the Christian world. To the Roman pontiff

\* Schmidt, ib.

they

they were wont to pay implicit deference, CHAP. XVI.  
without troubling themselves to inquire by what authority he reigned. The natural good sense of the inhabitants had induced them likewise to correct a variety of abuses, before the correction of abuses was emphatically enjoined by the authority of the church. The convents also had been purified by wholesome discipline; and such of them, as were notorious for profligate manners, had been shut up by order of the government, the nuns and friars being banished for ever from the Helvetic territory.

Without involving themselves in the subtilties of theology, the Swiss followed the established doctrines of the church. Of literary acquirement they had little to boast. We are told indeed, that in many places, it was no easy task to find a person qualified for the office of schoolmaster. The man who could read with tolerable fluency, who could conjugate a Latin verb without much hesitation, and who understood the common rules of arithmetic, was esteemed learned, and was almost sure of prefer-

CHAP.  
XVI.

preferment in the church. But, if to these accomplishments he added a turn for singing, his success was no longer dubious.

The Greek and Roman classics, which had been discovered in the abbey of St. Gal, were still confined within its walls; where the taste for literature, which dawned at an earlier period, seemed to have prematurely set in contentions and controversy.

Even the love of poetry, which seemed indigenous to the Alpine regions, had now lost most of its attractions. In the great commercial towns a spirit of calculation had extinguished every finer feeling; and the minstrel was obliged to seek encouragement in those sequestered spots, where the contagion of wealth had not yet diffused its influence.

Though the taste for heroic ballads however was every where upon the decline, the martial spirit still existed with undiminished force, and blended itself even among the superstitions of the age. In the mountainous districts, when the harvest was unfavourable, the peasants armed with

clubs ran tumultuously through the adjacent villages, assaulting every one they met. CHAP. XVI.

With these acts of violence were intermixed a thousand ridiculous ceremonies, supposed to be efficacious in calling down the rain from heaven, or in averting the eastern blight.

Neither were persons, in a more exalted sphere, exempt from the general infection. Felix Hammerlin of Zurich, an author of some reputation, treats the subject in a serious light. Speaking of an epidemy, which prevailed among the horned cattle, he recommends *benedictions*\* as the most efficacious remedy. In another part of his work, he considers the same prescription as equally powerful in allaying the fury of the winds, which he represents as frequently excited by the agency of infernal spirits.—

\* Ridiculous as this must appear to every reflecting mind, a similar ceremony is to this day practised throughout the ecclesiastical states in Italy, on the festival of St. Antony. Both dogs and horses receive a benediction, upon payment of a few pence, from the hands of officiating priests, who have found means to persuade the common people, that this indecent mockery is essential to the health and preservation of those animals.

He

CHAP. He even goes so far as to assert, that there  
 XVI. are cases, in which a christian is amply  
 justified in invoking the aid of the devil  
 himself. He applauds the bishop of Lau-  
 sanne, for reading certain texts of scripture,  
 by way of preserving the trout in the lake.  
 The letter N, he deems a certain specific  
 against the plague. Yet, in spite of all these  
 absurdities, this man was universally re-  
 spected by all his contemporaries, for the  
 strength of his genius and the benevolence  
 of his heart\*.

These anecdotes are sufficient to show  
 the strong hold, which superstition had  
 taken upon the human mind. Neither was  
 the conduct of the clergy by any means  
 calculated to dispel the illusion. No longer  
 occupied with the duties of religion, they  
 seldom condescended to reside in their pa-  
 rishes, but squandered the produce of their  
 pluralities in the splendid dissipations of  
 courts. It was far from being uncommon  
 for an Italian to obtain valuable ecclesias-  
 tical preferment in a country, with the lan-

\* Muller, ib.

guage of which he was totally unacquainted. In such cases, if he were a man of family or endowed with a cultivated mind, he naturally preferred the brilliant conversation and luxurious ease of Rome to the laborious duties of a profession, which he had embraced only from motives of interest. Thus was Trans-Alpine Europe drained annually of considerable sums, to support the pompous profligacy of the Roman court; while the sacred functions of religion were shamefully neglected, or carelessly performed by a substitute, whose incapacity and indolence were equally objects of contempt. Even children\* were named to benefices of considerable trust and profit; a practice not less calculated to degrade Christianity in the general estimation than to obstruct the progress of useful knowledge! For who would exhaust his youth in midnight studies, when preferment was reserved as the exclusive privilege of birth?

The bishops, in general, lived in a state of luxury and splendour, by no means con-

\* Leo X. is a striking example of this kind.

sonant

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XVI.

sonant to the temperance and simplicity of evangelical manners. Like the secular princes, they had their hounds\*, their horses, their mistresses, and their fools. Their tables vied with those of sovereigns, both for the magnificence of the plate, and the delicacy of the viands. The expenses incidental to such a stile of life, combined with the immense sums yearly transmitted to Rome, frequently left the most opulent prelates in a state not less disgraceful to themselves than burdensome to their dioceses. Contests, attended with the most disastrous consequences, arose from the system of extortion, which these embarrassments rendered necessary. Pope Innocent V. in a letter to the emperor Rodolphus, complains that the count of Juliers, after persecuting the church of Cologne, had attacked the bishop with open violence. Shortly afterward the count fell a victim to the just indignation of the people of Aix-la-Chapelle. No

\* That the love of hunting was a passion common to ecclesiastics in early times, appears clear from the following circumstances: "It is an ancient branch of the king's prerogative at the death of a bishop, to have his kennel of hounds". Blackstone's Commentaries, II: xvii.

SOONER

sooner was the event known at Cologne, CHAP. XVI. than the bishop celebrated mass with extraordinary solemnity, returning thanks to his patron, St. Peter, for this signal delivery. At the conclusion of the service, he ordered the following verse to be sung : “ Now know I, that the Lord has sent his “ angel to deliver me from the jaws of the “ lion\*.

This instance is by no means a singular one. Bishops were continually engaged in hostilities with the laity; and so frequent indeed were these scenes of discord, that military skill seems to have formed no inconsiderable feature in the character of an accomplished prelate. Æneas Sylvius praises Dietric, bishop of Cologne, for his proficiency in the art of war. “ He was engaged,” says the pious Italian, “ in many contests for the defence of the church, in all of which he distinguished himself as a skilful commander, and a gallant soldier.†” Baldwin of Luxemburg, archbishop of Treves, is celebrated as one of the most remarkable personages of his age; and yet in

\* Schmidt, VII. xliv. † Id. ib.

perusing



CHAP. perusing his history, we can discover no-  
 XVI. thing characteristical of the episcopal pro-  
 fession, according to our ideas of that sa-  
 cred function. His biographer, on the con-  
 trary, is continually occupied in the narra-  
 tion of battles and sieges; of towns sacked,  
 and castles stormed\*. Happy is it for the  
 world, that those days of violence are pass-  
 ed, and that the clergy have once more as-  
 sumed the appropriate qualities of benevo-  
 lence and charity. In every country in  
 Europe, the sword and the mitre are now  
 disunited; but in none do the virtues of  
 the christian bishop shine with purer radi-  
 ance than in our own.

In the preceding chapters we have view-  
 ed the Helvetic people under circumstances  
 which cannot have failed to interest every  
 generous mind. For what spectacle can  
 be more sublime than the struggles of  
 valour in the cause of independence? With  
 progressive pleasure we have followed them  
 from the field of Rutli, and the defile of  
 Morgarten, to the establishment of the

\* Schmidt, ib.

grand

grand federative UNION between the eight cantons. We have examined their conduct, with minute attention, during the noble contest. We have beheld whole armies of mercenaries flying before a handful of men, who had nothing to support them but the love of liberty; while all the resources and efforts of Austria served only to display the folly of attempting to subjugate a nation, which is resolutely determined to be free.

Such was the happy destiny of the Swiss, so long as their bosoms glowed with the pure flame of patriotism; and labour, and industry, gave health and vigour to their bodies. But while their resistless courage excites our warmest praise, admiration does not render us blind to their growing imperfections. By gradations scarcely perceptible we have seen them declining from that primeval simplicity and integrity, which gave dignity to the human character. Their virtues were the offspring of poverty. Under the incumbrances of successful commerce, they expired. An augmented trade gave birth to that degrading selfish-

CHAP. ness, which deadens the heart to every finer  
XVI. feeling. Thence arose the contracted spirit of party, which proves so fatal to all free constitutions, and which even the state-ly fabric of monarchical governments is scarcely competent to resist.

Yet how bright was the actual prospect! Rhætia was united with Glaris. The Appenzellers were rewarded, for their generous struggle, by the friendship and alliance of the confederates. The jurisdiction of Uri extended to the southern side of the St. Gothard, and filled the pusillanimous minds of Italian despots with dismay. Schweitz, the parent of Helvetic liberty, existed an object of dread and reverence to surrounding nations. While Unterwalden was distinguished by a rigid adherence to all those virtues, which had animated the founders of the Helvetic league. By the acquisition of independence, Zug and Glaris had obtained the ultimate object of their wishes; while by their integrity, their courage and their moderation, they rendered themselves worthy of the blessing. An extensive commerce, the child of freedom, had

had given wealth and prosperity to Lucerne, Berne, and Zurich. Such was the picture, that Helvetia presented to the admiring world!

It is not by the rule and compass, that we must estimate national happiness or glory. It is by the sublimity of his ideas, the energy of his conduct, and the practice of every moral duty, that man attains celebrity. In this point of view, the little states of Greece were infinitely superior to the most potent of the Asiatic despots. A band of robbers and outlaws, assembled under the command of Romulus, dictated laws to the world. And in our days, three millions of inhabitants, dispersed over the immense continent of America, have resisted all the treasure and all the power of Britain.

The heroic period of Helvetic history (a period, which will bear a comparison with the proudest annals of antiquity) terminates at the treaty with Austria, which is termed 'the fifty years truce.' That was, indeed, the golden age of Switzerland. She had union at home, respectability and confidence

CHAP. dence abroad. Her towns were embellished,  
 XVI. her governments were energetic. Nor were  
 ~~~~~ these blessings the result of artful intrigues,  
 or of deep laid policy, but the spontane-  
 ous growth of republican virtue; of virtue,  
 which raised her founders to a level with  
 the most celebrated heroes, and which pre-  
 served her subjects in peace and prosperity,  
 so long as LIBERTY AND UNANIMITY  
 WERE THE BULWARKS OF THE CONFEDERACY!

END OF VOLUME TWO.




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J. G. Barnard, Printer, Skinner-Street, London.













